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MAGAZINE

Police call for lower alcohol limit

Drink-drive cases up by 18 per cent

By STEWART TENDER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

THE number of motorists caught drinking and driving over the Christmas and new year holiday rose by 18 per cent compared with last year. The total - 5,209 in England and Wales - was the second highest this decade.

There were also more accidents in which one of the parties had been drinking - up 4 per cent from 939 in 1994.

The figures prompted police and road safety campaigners to call for a lower alcohol limit for drivers and for the police to have greater discretion over when to give people breath tests. John Bowis, the Road Safety Minister, said: "Too many drivers are still ignoring the very clear message that drinking and driving wrecks lives."

But he added: "These figures reflect the fact that all police forces have applied a policy of breath-testing every driver involved in an accident. More tests result in 'higher figures.'

It was still difficult to establish, however, whether this year's increase really meant that more people were drinking and driving - or simply that more were caught - since overall figures were available for the number of tests carried out. Most forces refuse to give such statistics.

Of those that did, Merseyside reported that it tested three times as many drivers as it did last year - but far fewer were found positive: 97 out of 11,600, compared with 135 in 1995. Gloucestershire, Norfolk and Cumbria also reported a smaller percentage of tested drivers being found over the limit.

In Northumbria, however,



one in four drivers tested was over the limit, and in Cambridgeshire the number of arrests for drinking and driving or refusing a breath test was three times as high as over Christmas 1995. West Mercia also reported a 35 per cent increase in the number of positive tests, up from 76 in 1994.

The figures for England and Wales come from a road safety campaign on December 31 to January 1. In Scotland, the number of people tested was up by 80 per cent to 100,000 in December, of whom 1 per cent were found to be positive.

Police chiefs were disappointed that a £1.2 million advertising campaign had not brought a further improvement on last year's drop in the number of positive tests. Paul Manning, secretary of the Association of Chief Police Officers' traffic committee, thought that a plateau might have been reached and that the message might have to be reinforced.

The police want greater "unfettered" powers to stop taken."

and test drivers and they are also in favour of reducing the legal alcohol limit for driving from 80mg per 100ml of blood to 50mg.

Richard Freeman of the AA agreed that the campaign may now be stuck and called for a new initiative. He said: "It's quite obvious that the people drinking and driving are doing so quite deliberately and are ignoring advice. The police must be allowed to better target suspects. If that means police parking down the road from a pub, then so be it.

"It's the threat of being caught and prosecuted that's the main threat which may prevent people from doing it - that threat must be increased if necessary."

The RAC's campaigns manager, Richard Woods, said: "Despite high profile campaigns, the latest figures show there's still a minority, a hardcore of drinking drivers. We need to break through the mentality that these drivers have that drinking and driving isn't an offence. If we can explain the consequences of drunk-driving in human terms as well as in financial terms - the long-term impact on the drink-driver's own livelihood - perhaps that's the way forward."

Dave Rogers, road safety adviser for the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, also backed those calling for a lower alcohol limit, saying: "We believe the only long-term solution is a gradual reduction to zero at stages agreed by the police and relevant authorities. If people do not listen to the warnings, tougher action will have to be taken."

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The police want greater "unfettered" powers to stop taken."



Nicola Dixon: visited club to show off new look after dying her blonde hair black

Parents mourn schoolgirl killed in church garden

By DANIEL McGROarty

THE parents of a 17-year-old schoolgirl who was found battered to death on New Year's Day paid tribute to their daughter yesterday in a poignant handwritten note seeking public help in the hunt for the killer.

Nicola Dixon had stayed at home in Sutton Coldfield while her family went to visit relatives in Northumberland on Tuesday because she had been due to take her driving test. "Ironically, the test was cancelled because of the snow," the family said.

That evening she had joined friends at a social club for half an hour, showing off her new look - she had dyed her blonde hair black. At 9.45 she left to walk three-quarters of a mile to a public house in the centre of Sutton Coldfield, where she intended to meet a girlfriend.

But she got only halfway there before being battered about the head, sexually as-

saulted and left for dead. The police said yesterday that her injuries showed that she put up a valiant struggle, which passers-by might have mistaken for larking about. Her body was found the next morning in a garden next to the rectory.

The Rev Daniel and Valerie Connolly had arrived from Plymouth this week and Mrs Connolly was showing some friends around the garden of the empty curate's house next door when she saw the body in the snow.

Detective Chief Inspector Kevin Roberts said: "It's most likely that she was killed in the garden. Because of the freezing conditions it will be impossible to tell exactly when she died. We haven't found a weapon. It could have been something as basic as a brick or a stone. Her family are in deep shock. You can imagine how they feel."

Rita and Andy Dixon and their 16-year-old son, Gra-

ham, said in their statement that they were devastated. Describing Nicola as "the sort of girl any parent or brother would want", they said: "She was a happy girl who was popular, talented, hard-working and lived her life to the full. We want to help you to get the public to help to find who did this to her. We and the rest of her family and her friends are going through hell and we don't want anyone else to suffer in this way."

Miss Dixon had been studying for A levels in business studies, art and photography. She was also planning to take her Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award in the summer. The family statement added that since moving to Sutton Coldfield they had made many friends; Miss Dixon had become involved with the Beavers group and helped at an infants' school. "We know they will all miss her. We are missing her too."

New grass stays green whatever the weather

By NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH scientists have developed a grass that always remains green and, they believe it will be the answer to the prayers of many a groundsman and gardener.

The grass continues to look fresh even in drought-like conditions that would turn normal grasses brown. It has been bred by researchers at the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research at Aberystwyth, Wales, who claim it stays green even after it withers.

The development is an outcome of the discovery of a natural, mutant strain of meadow fescue, which is wide-

5,000 McJobs as chain expands

McDonald's, the American hamburger chain, is planning to create 5,000 jobs in Britain this year, spending £116 million on opening up to 110 new restaurants. Most will be drive-through restaurants paying new staff by the hour.

McDonald's said yesterday

that it had created almost

4,500 new jobs in Britain last

year by opening 90 new

restaurants

The chain has now been transferred to other grasses, including some that are being developed commercially. The hope is that they will find their way on to football pitches, golf courses, parks and other public places. The grass also has great potential as a protein-rich winter animal feed.

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years. The results showed that those who cut down on fat and ate more carbohydrate had preserved three times as much of their initial weight loss at the end of the period as those who counted the calories and tried to restrict what they ate.

Half the group were given a 24-page booklet which advised them to spread butter or margarine thinly, use the frying pan sparingly and eat more bread, potato and pasta. They were allowed to eat as much as they liked provided that they stuck to low-fat, high carbohydrate foods.

The rest of the women were given

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The rest of the women were given

colour-coded counters designed to allow them to calculate the calorie content of different foods. They were allowed up to 1,875 calories a day, but this was reduced if their weight started to rise.

After two years the low-fat, high-carbohydrate group were still more than a stone (7lb 9oz) below their starting weight while the calorie counters were less than half a stone (5lb 8oz).

The authors of the research, which was conducted in Denmark and published in the *British Medical Journal*, say: "Our study shows that a low-fat,

It's not the calories that count in the fight on slab

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

DIETS based on counting calories are less effective in keeping weight down than changing the type of foods eaten, researchers have found.

The toughest part of post-Christmas dieting is preventing hard-earned pounds from creeping back on before summer. Scientists have discovered that people who swap chips for pasta, but allow themselves unlimited amounts, do better than those who try to restrict the total quantity.

The progress of a group of 43 overweight women who had lost almost two stone (27lb 11oz) on average on a crash diet was followed over two

years. The results showed that those who cut down on fat and ate more carbohydrate had preserved three times as much of their initial weight loss at the end of the period as those who counted the calories and tried to restrict what they ate.

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high-carbohydrate diet consumed ad lib was superior to a more traditional fixed-energy intake diet in maintaining weight and preventing relapse two years after a major weight loss.

Professor Soren Toustrup and his colleagues at the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University in Copenhagen say that the rise in obesity in the West - it has doubled in Britain between 1980 and 1991 despite a reduction in fat consumption - is attributable to the fall in physical activity.

No miracle cures, page 5

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Ancient boundaries may be replanted after ruling

Victory for 'hedgerow hero' – or thorough nuisance'

By PAUL WILKINSON



Colin Seymour yesterday: first consecutive victory

BRITAIN'S most successful amateur litigant yesterday scored a historic court victory that could lead to the replanting of ancient hedge rows.

The decision was a personal triumph – and an ill-conceived victory – for the public rights campaigner Colin Seymour. Using an 1845 Enclosure Act, he brought the action after the parish council in his home village of Flamborough, East Yorkshire, voted to pull up a 35-yard hawthorn hedge in work for a new bowling green.

At Hull County Court, Judge Cracknell made a declaration requiring the parish council to "maintain for ever" the hedge, which will protect wild flowers and nesting birds. He said: "It is a singularly indistinguishable hedge. It is very badly maintained, unkempt and straggly, but it does have one claim to fame: it is an Enclosure hedge, dating back to the latter part of the 18th century. The Act and law are still good and the parish council is still bound by it."

Mr Seymour, 63, said: "I'm absolutely delighted. The judge gave the most comprehensive judgement which we could not have wished for in our wildest dreams. Other people throughout the country may be able to use the judgement in their own actions to stop the destruction of road-

side hedgerow." Environmental campaigners claim that miles of lost ancient hedgerow will have to be replanted.

Peter Bowler, campaigns officer for the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, which supported the case, said: "We believe the judgement is retrospective, and could lead to many thousands of lost hedgerows having to be replanted. Between 1996 and 1997, 5,000 miles were grubbed out each year in the name of agricultural efficiency."

The trust believes there are about 40,000 miles of ancient hedging elsewhere in England and Wales controlled by around 4,500 Acts similar to the 1765 Flamborough Enclosure Act.

Peter Gelfard, of the County Landowners Association, said the court decision would

have to be examined extremely carefully. "Enclosure awards made at various stages during various centuries did differ, so I think it is very difficult to tell at this point whether this particular test case will have the result of protecting all hedges in enclosure awards."

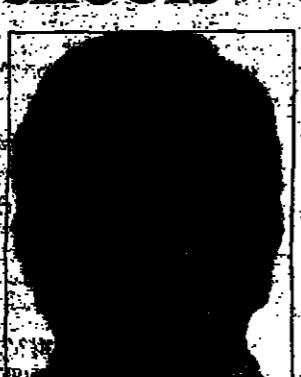
We do accept that there is a need to protect the most important hedges," he said.

Judge Cracknell himself added a word of caution: "It would be wrong to read too much into this case in terms of significance for roadside hedges generally. There are over 4,000 enclosure Acts, and whether a provision is binding has to be judged in each individual case. Mr Seymour has a particular reputation for establishing himself in this area of law. He may be a hero

Leading article, page 17

Dunblane threat man is banned from schools

By STEPHEN FARNELL



A FORMER soldier who told a prison chaplain he planned to "do a Dunblane" was banned from schools in southeast London yesterday, the day before his release from jail.

Greenwich council won an interim injunction against David Jennings, 30, forbidding him from entering or trying to enter schools and council buildings owned or carrying firearms and interacting with children, teachers or council employees.

Jennings, from Eltham, a twice-married father of ten children, has previous convictions for possessing a firearm in public and assaulting council officials.

He made the threat to a chaplain at Highpoint prison, Suffolk, last summer after becoming angry at Greenwich council's treatment of his children in care. Immediately after learning of the remark the authority aliened all head teachers and parents, circulated his picture and began a review of security at schools.

Backed by Sir Nicholas Lyell, QC, the Attorney-General, the council's solicitors were originally granted a High Court hearing next Monday, the day before Jennings's release from Swaleside prison, Isle of Sheppey, Kent, after serving 30 months for assault. However on New Year's Eve Greenwich learnt he was to be released today, because of time served in

Jennings: never meant to carry out threat

custody while on remand. The authority sought and was granted an emergency hearing. After studying detailed maps of the area Mr Justice Butcher granted the interim order pending a full hearing on Monday.

Rosie Brocklehurst, a spokeswoman for Greenwich, confirmed after the hearing that the injunction banned Jennings from going within 250 yards of some schools and council buildings. "Given that he has threats and used the words 'do a Dunblane' we felt he had to take action."

James Bancroft, Jennings's solicitor, said his client had never intended to carry out the threat and wanted to return home. Although Jennings accepted the temporary injunction he would contest the full hearing because of the "onerous" 250-yard exclusion zone, Mr Bancroft said.

Prince and the P-Ts opt for skiing over queueing

By EMMA WILKINS



THE Prince of Wales delayed the start of his day's skiing in Switzerland yesterday when he refused to jump the queue for a cable car.

The Prince who is on holiday with his younger son Prince Harry and three female companions, was at the back of a queue of 200 people at the foot of the Gotschna mountain in Klosters. Before striding off in search of another mountain with a smaller queue, he told an aide: "I'm sorry, I'm not going to queue jump with all these people here."

Also with the Prince are Tiggy Legge-Bourke, 30, his personal assistant, and the Palmer-Tomkinson sisters, Tara, 25, and Santa, 27. The girls are daughters of the Prince's old friends Charles and Patti Palmer-Tomkinson. The couple, who are known as the P-Ts, were in the royal party when an avalanche killed Major Hugh Lindsay in 1988.

Santa, who organises publicity for society jeweller Theo Fennell, is named after a

bumper Santa barley crop which her father produced on the family farm in Dummer, Hampshire, in the year of her birth. As a concession to his half-Argentinian wife, the father agreed to a minor amendment to "Santa" – Spanish for saint.

Her younger sister, who writes on society matters for The Sunday Times, has long been friendly with Prince William and Prince Harry.

While she is a celebrated London party-goer, Tiggy Legge-Bourke prefers the invigorating air of High

Snow reports, page 42



The new improved Superman has extra powers

After 60 years, man of steel changes pants

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

IT'S NOT a bird. It's not a plane. And it does not look like the old familiar Superman. After six decades in the same red, yellow and blue togs, the comic book superhero is getting a change of costume and some new powers to go with it.

From March, the muscle-bound crusader from the planet Krypton will don body-hugging tights in electric blue and dump his trusty cape. His new trademark will be a jagged "S" embossed on his chest like a bolt of lightning. Mike Carlin, Editor of DC Comics, said: "He still wears an 'S' on his chest but it's not the one we had."

The revamped Superman will enjoy new "energy-based" powers. Instead of flying, he will "zap" from place to place like a streak of electricity, although sources say he will have trouble landing at first. Bolts will no longer bounce off him, but will pass straight through or get trapped in his "energy matrix".

His alter ego, Clark Kent, will pay a price, however. In future, the four-eyed Kent, a reporter for the *Daily Planet*, will suffer from such distinctly human ailments as head colds and torn muscles.

Superman was created by the artist Joe Shuster and the writer Jerry Siegel in the

1930s, while both were in their teens. He made his first comic-book appearance in June 1938, and has survived many a plot twist since.

He was killed off in 1992, but was revived nine months later. Last autumn saw the publication of *Superman: The Wedding Album*, after his marriage in the series shown on television. Perhaps, as a result of a fulfilled emotional life, Superman seemed to lose his touch. His powers "dwindled away" after his marriage to Lois Lane, Mr Carlin explained. "He tried different ways of boosting his energies and his powers, and all these things have combined to alter him."



The old Superman, with cape and pants

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Scientists confirm hair of the dog does cure hangovers

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

DRINKERS have sworn by it for centuries but now scientists have proved it is true: a morning-after tipple does stop hangovers.

A small dose of alcohol taken the morning after a night of drinking can head off a hangover by blocking the metabolism of the substances in drink that cause the symptoms.

Research has shown that it is not the alcohol in the drink that triggers hangovers, but substances called congeners. These are complex organic molecules, such as methanol and acetone.

The main culprit is thought to be methanol, a large quantity of which is present in red wine. The body metabolises it to form formaldehyde and formic acid, which have been linked to the typical hangover symptoms of headache, nausea and fatigue.

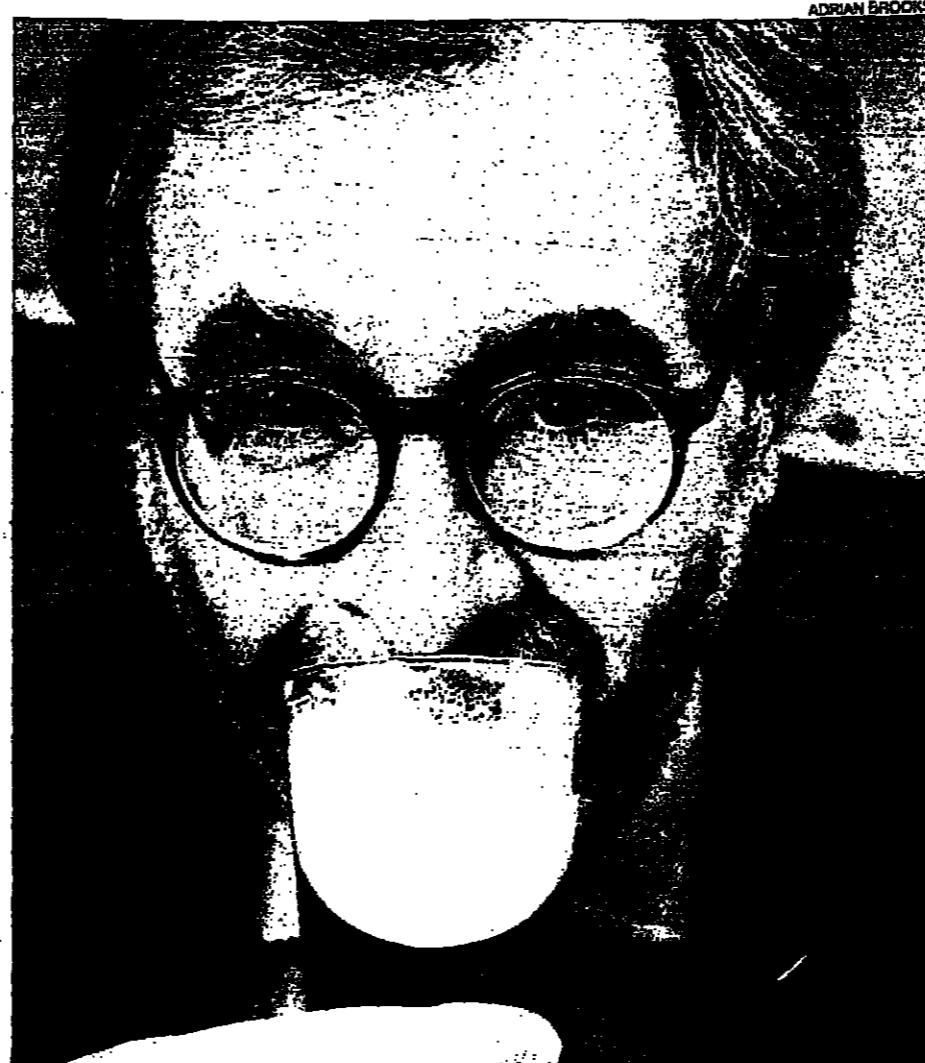
A small quantity of ethanol, the type of alcohol found in drinks, blocks the formation of

formaldehyde and formic acid, providing an effective treatment for hangovers, according to Dr Ian Calder of the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery in London. Dr Calder says that a glass of sherry or wine is sufficient to stave off a hangover, although the type of drink is immaterial so long as it contains a small quantity of ethanol.

Most top hotels have hangover cures often made to secret recipes. But they are all based on small amounts of alcohol disguised so it doesn't burn the stomach," Dr Calder, a consultant anaesthetist, says.

However, drinking to stave off a hangover is not without its hazards. An American expert, called Dr Earlywine, specialises in the *Journal of Addictive Behaviour* in 1993 that fear of hangovers could explain why some people become alcoholics: they carry on drinking to avoid the unpleasant symptoms.

Writing in the *British Medical Journal*, Dr Calder says half a glass of sherry or wine is sufficient to stave off a hangover



Ian Calder says half a glass of sherry or wine is sufficient to stave off a hangover

No miracle cures, slimmers are told

By LIN JENKINS

THOSE hoping to recover their pre-Christmas身 should shed more pounds in cash than weight, a consumer group has said. As the multi-million-pound slimming industry hones its new year sales pitch, slimmers have been cautioned that there are no miracle cures.

The Consumers' Association magazine *Which?* found many claims about weight loss to be misleading. Slimming clubs performed well but the researchers said that anyone could set one up without any formal qualification or knowledge of the subject. The five leading national clubs, however, all found a degree of favour although the psychologists and dietitians assessing them said slimmers should choose carefully to find a regime tailored to their needs.

Rosmary Conley Diet and Fitness Clubs (£3.75 a 1½-hour session; joining fee £20) were praised for being the only one offering exercise, but it meant there was less time to deal with other aspects of dieting such as motivation.

Slimmers Club UK (£3.50 for 1½ hours; fee £6.50) had a well-balanced diet plan but

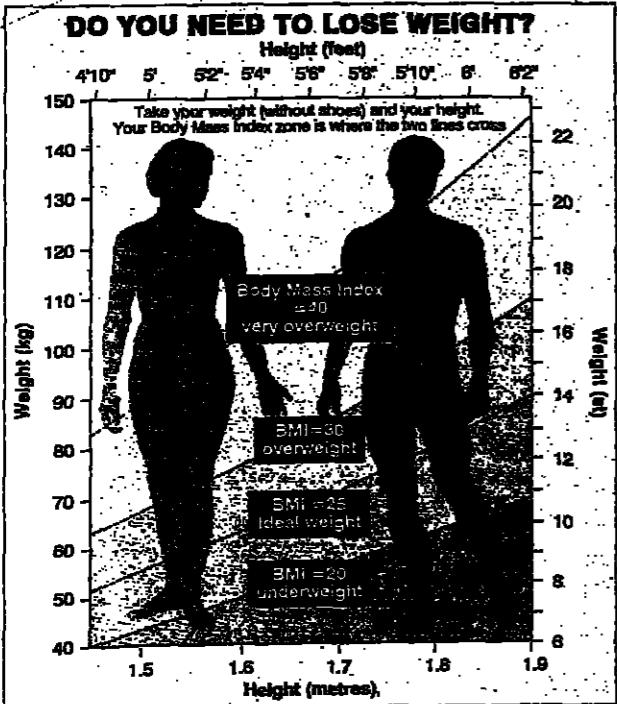
the weighing of food could be too rigid for some people.

Slimming Magazine Clubs (£2.90 for 1½ hours; fee £6) demand a weight loss of at least 5lb a week and offer 17 diets but may prove disheartening to the very overweight.

The magazine found that Slimming World (£2.90 for 2 hours for £6.95) focused on the psychological effects of being overweight but the idea of "sin foods", some of which were fruit or vegetables, left the researchers uneasy.

At Weight Watchers (£3.95 for 1 hour; fee £9) the regime could help to develop healthy lifestyle changes but calorie-counting could deflect a slimmer from thinking about food and exercise in terms of health and enjoyment.

The range of meal replacements, calorie-controlled portions of food and drink, made worrying claims, the magazine says. "It is hard to see how replacing meals with a milkshake or biscuit bar can be described as healthy or natural." Some of the top-selling diet books were considered helpful but the magazine says the simple way to diet is to restrict energy-rich foods and take more exercise.



Small packages are best, tour poll says

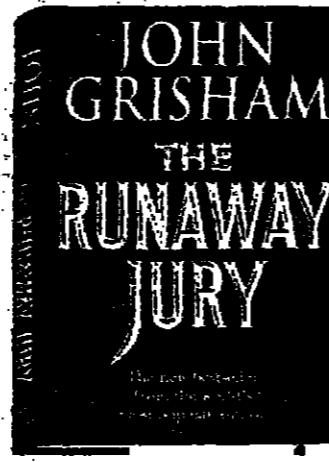
By HARVEY ELLIOTT, TRAVEL CORRESPONDENT

HOLIDAYMAKERS who choose small, independent tour operators are more likely to be satisfied than those who choose the travel giants, according to the consumers' magazine *holiday Which?*

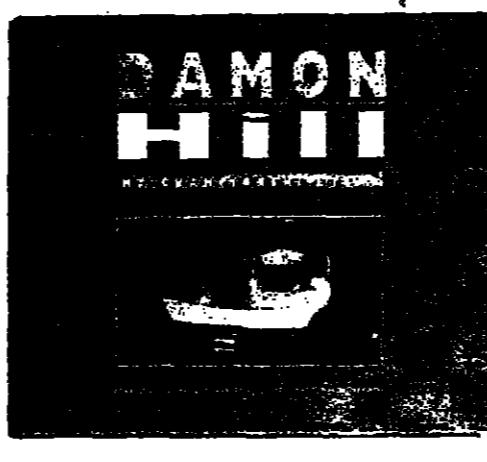
In response to the question "Would you recommend this company to a friend?", the readers' poll put Swiss Travel Service top, followed by French specialists VFB Holidays, the Travel Club of Uptonshire, Sunvill, Simply Travel, Cunard, Euromax and Virgin Holidays. All are likely to see repeat customers, says the magazine, while First Choice, Unijet and Sunworld were "likely to be one-off wonders".

"Inspirations was last after a series of flight delays in the summer. The findings were attacked by leading tour operators. Richard Carrick, Airtours'

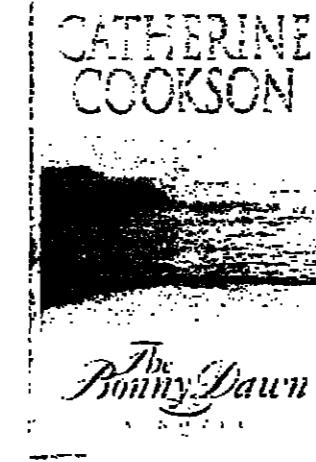
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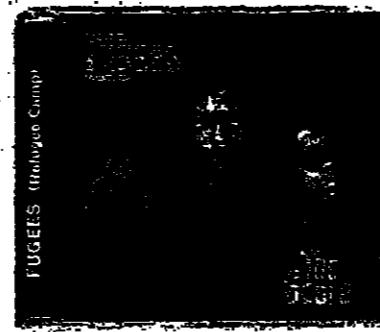
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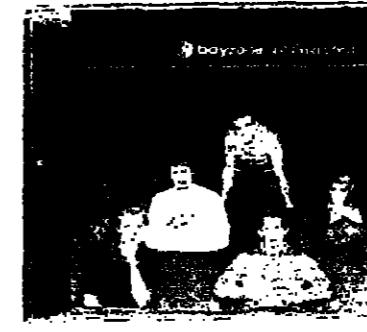
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Pollution suspected as study shows big fall in male fertility

By DOMINIC KENNEDY, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

MEN'S sperm production has halved in a decade, according to a study that will heighten fears that male fertility is falling dramatically.

Scientists, unable to find any link with alcohol, smoking or drugs, are blaming poisons in the environment.

A recent theory says chemical effluents in the environment could mimic the female hormone oestrogen.

For the first time, evidence has been found that men's testicles are becoming significantly lighter.

Scientists studied post-mortem

examinations of 528 men aged 35 to 69 who died in Finland between 1981 and 1991.

During that decade, the proportion of men who had the normal biological processes leading to sperm production fell from 50.4 per cent to 26.9 per cent.

There was a significant increase in men in whom no mature sperm cells were seen.

Men with a complete loss of

such cells rose from 20 per cent to 20 per cent and those with a reduced number of cells rose from 31.4 per cent to 48.5 per cent.

Testicles fell in weight

from 18.9 grams in 1981 to 17.8 grams in 1991. Researchers from Helsinki University, led by Dr Jarkko Pajari, spoke to relatives to check for lifestyle details such as drinking.

In today's *British Medical Journal*, they report: "Declining spermatogenesis was not explained by different exposure to drugs or the incidence of smoking or alcohol consumption, and thus more research is clearly needed." Toxins in the environment have become the most likely culprit.

In 1992, research showed that sperm counts fell by almost 50 per cent in half a century, from 113 million per millilitre of semen in 1940 to 66 million in 1990.

French scientists reported a 2 per cent decline in sperm counts of Parisian donors between 1973 and 1992. The sperm's swimming ability had declined.

A British study showed men born in the 1970s produced 25 per cent fewer sperm than those born in the 1950s. At an annual decline of 2 per cent, men born 60 years from now could be infertile.

When Churchill championed the use of poison gas

By ROBIN YOUNG

WINSTON CHURCHILL was a robust champion of the use of poison gas in warfare and could not understand the "squeamishness" of those who objected to it, newly released documents showed yesterday.

At the end of the First World War, when Churchill was Secretary of State for War, the British Government was considering the future use of gas, and Churchill expressed the view that to jib at the use of gas, while accepting high explosives, was "sheer affectation".

A memo from the air staff dated May 22, 1919, disclosed: "Chemical warfare cannot now be ruled out of war. During 1919 had the war

continued, gas would have been almost our most formidable weapon. One shell in every four that left our lines would have been a gas shell and tanks would have been using it freely."

The memo made it clear that the air staff did not anticipate great suffering or permanent physical injury resulting from the use of gas but said: "At the critical moment of the battle large bodies of troops would have been rendered temporarily incapable of further fighting and would have fallen into our hands as prisoners."

The staff memorandum urged that if "lachrymatory gas" were banned on humani-

tarian grounds there should be far stronger arguments for the abolition of high explosives, "a far more terrible weapon" which took lives, shattered bones, destroyed nerves and produced madness.

The "lachrymatory gas" referred to by Churchill was mustard gas, which had been used on a large scale by the Germans in the First World War. Like phosgene, also used in the war, it disabled troops by causing temporary blindness without usually killing them, though repeated exposure could cause skin blistering and lung damage, as well as permanent blindness.

One argument that weighed heavily with the service com-

manders was that if Britain abstained from the use of gas other adversaries might not be so conscientious. The very existence of gas as a weapon, they argued, would add more weight to the consideration nations gave "before subjecting their disputes to the arbitrament of war".

It was a view Churchill, as

president of the Air Council, roundly backed in a memo dated May 12, 1919. "I do not understand the squeamishness about the use of gas," he wrote. "It is sheer affectation to lacerate a man with the poisonous fragment of a bursting shell and to boggle at making his eyes water by means of a lachrymatory gas."

I am strongly in favour of using poisonous gas against uncivilised tribes."

Indeed, Britain did go on to research and practise the use of gas in circumstances such as Churchill envisaged when Kurds were bombed in the mid-1920s by British forces using gas. Among those taking part as a young pilot was

Arthur "Bomber" Harris, who was later to head Bomber Command in the Second World War.

Churchill wrote that the use of gas "could spread a lively terror" among uncivilised peoples, who would not understand the force unleashed against them without any "serious or permanent effect

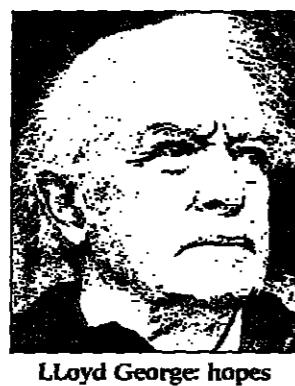
on most of those affected". In March 1920, a Cabinet minute declared that the employment of gas in warfare "ought never to have been employed and we should rejoice to see it stopped", noting that some civilian departments regarded it as "dishonourable". The air staff, though, held to its view.



Churchill being cheered by men of The Royal Scots Fusiliers in 1941, 22 years after he had urged the use of gas. His gas mask is by his side.

Letter reveals Lloyd George's regard for King 'forced to abdicate'

By TIM JONES



AN UNPUBLISHED letter from David Lloyd George shows that the former Liberal Prime Minister was bitterly opposed to the abdication of Edward VIII.

The letter, written on December 11, 1936, immediately after the Abdication, also demonstrated his enduring contempt for Stanley Baldwin, who was then the Conservative incumbent at Downing Street. Writing from holiday in Jamaica to his son, Gwynneth, the 73-year-old Lloyd George described the uncrowned

king who abdicated for love of Wallis Simpson in fond terms, saying: "A really democratic King has been driven from his Throne by the Tories and the help of the Labour Party."

Edward, he said, was "a great man hounded from the throne" by that arch-humble Baldwin. "He was also scoffing of Clement Attlee, who was to become Labour Prime Minister. The letter adds: "Attlee and his soft-headed junta have been flattered into playing the Tory game. The real tragedy of democracy is that its cause has somehow or other been entrusted to fools. The Tories now have just the

sort of King [George VI] which suits them. He will not pry into inconvenient questions: he will always sign on the dotted line without asking any questions."

Lloyd George regretted that Winston Churchill had been forced to stand up "alone and unsupported in the synagogue of the Pharisees". The letter has been acquired by the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, from Viscount Tenby, Lloyd George's grandson. John Graham Jones, assistant archivist in charge of the Welsh political archive, says there were good reasons for Lloyd

George's support for the king. He said: "Ever since Edward's investiture as Prince of Wales at Caernarfon Castle in 1911, Lloyd George had looked upon the young prince as an honorary Welshman. He regarded him as a champion of the underdog who could introduce a touch of democracy to the throne."

Edward's accession in January 1936 was generally welcomed by Lloyd George and, while he was fully aware of the king's intimate relationship with Mrs Simpson, he let it be known that he was prepared to act as his champion against Baldwin.

Mr Jones said: "At the beginning of November 1936, Lloyd George left London to spend some time in Jamaica. Within three weeks, the abdication crisis accelerated. The problem became known to the general public on December 2 and was raised in Parliament the following day."

Baldwin refused a debate in the Commons and bullied the near-hysterical Edward into signing the abdication papers while Lloyd George was out of the way.

Lloyd George died in 1945, the year in which he became an earl.

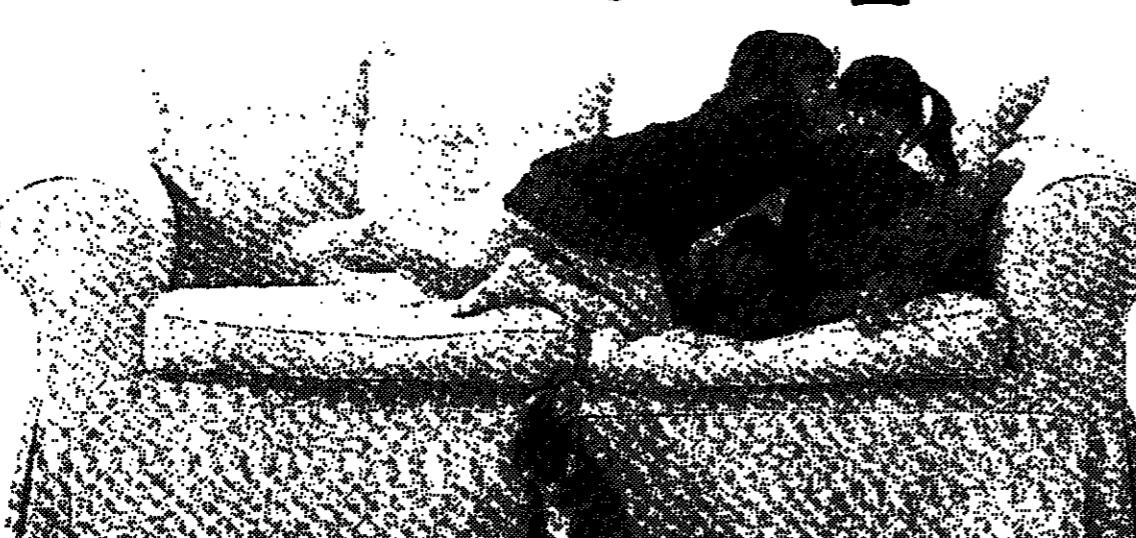


Edward: "a great man"

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Monopolies watchdog plans curb

Electrical giants deny colluding on price of goods

By EMMA WILKINS

ELECTRICAL manufacturers denied price fixing yesterday after a report that the Monopolies and Mergers Commission was set to recommend better protection for consumers.

Under new proposals, the makers of domestic electrical goods could be banned from using recommended retail prices to control the prices in shops. A report in the *Economist* says that the commission has discovered a "complex monopoly" in the sale of electrical goods including televisions, video recorders, dishwashers and refrigerators.

The watchdog body has been investigating pricing in the domestic electrical appliances market for the past two years and is due to report to Ian Lang, the Trade Secretary, in April.

Electrical goods manufacturers deny the existence of price fixing, which is illegal. But consumers remain perplexed by the similarity of prices for many goods in shops from John O'Groats to Lands End.

A spokesman for Sony said yesterday that price fixing was against the law but he conceded that the whole area was a "sensitive issue" because of the

MMC report. The spokesman said: "Prices are among the lowest in Europe."

"Over the past ten years, while the prices of all consumer durables and services have gone up by over 43 per cent, the average price of audiovisual products has decreased by 23 per cent."

A spokesman for Dixons denied allegations of price fixing and said that similarity of prices was due to the extremely competitive nature of the market.

"If you find the same TV in different shops at about the same price, then that is an example of exactly how competitive our market is. Every-

thing the MMC was asked to investigate in the wake of a report by the Office of Fair Trading, which found there was a *prima facie* case of price fixing in the market.

Sir Bryan Carsberg, the Director General of Fair Trading, said at the time: "Our information indicates that some manufacturers accounting for well over 25 per cent of the supply have been engaging in practices designed to sustain retail price levels.

"These include refusing to supply to retailers who sold the goods below the manufacturers' recommended retail price and outlets such as discount warehouse clubs," he said.

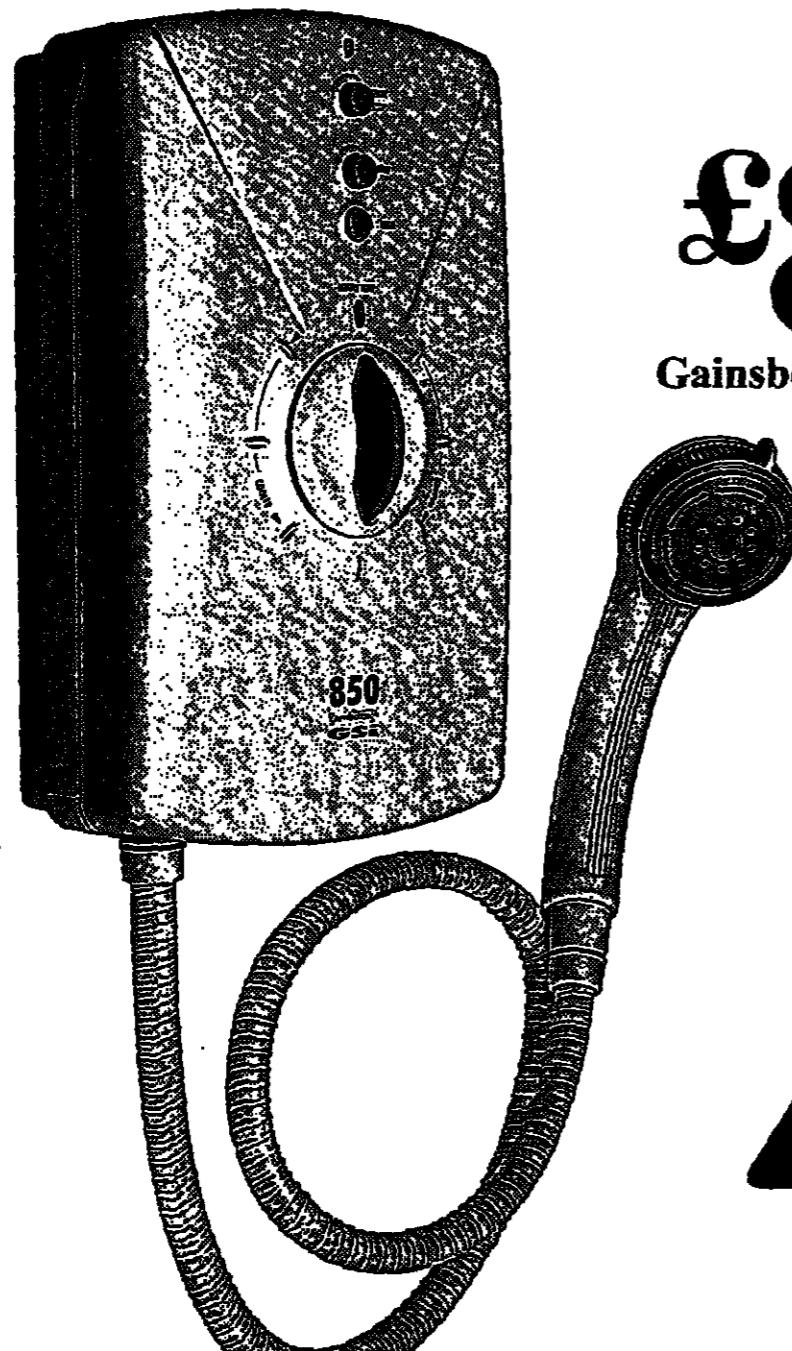


Carsberg: report led to investigation



The Queen waits to cross a road while out riding with a groom at Sandringham yesterday. Wearing her usual beige riding mac and hood, the Queen and her companion spent 45 minutes riding over snow-covered fields.

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Labour to fund computer lessons for all teachers

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

NEW teachers will be required to pass examinations in computer skills under a Labour government. David Blunkett, the Shadow Education Secretary, will announce tomorrow, Labour's plans for a technology revolution will depend on all teachers being familiar with the Internet. Mr Blunkett will tell a conference of educationists in Sheffield.

He will also unveil a £150-million scheme to give existing teachers computer lessons. To escape the party's curb on pre-election spending promises, Mr Blunkett will say all the money will come from lottery cash currently allocated to the Millennium Fund.

The speech will detail how the party will make good promises by Tony Blair to create a "national grid" of computing expertise by developing the use of the Internet in schools. Labour plans to work with BT to ensure every school has access to a source of worldwide information.

However, Mr Blunkett will tell the North of England Education Conference tomorrow that far too few teachers are in touch with the computer age. He also believes that the five days a year set aside for teacher training in schools could be better spent on new technology.

Less than a third of teachers have so far taken even a basic computer course. Labour's analysis of school inspectors' reports reveals that three schools in ten fail to provide

More cash cleans up beaches

BRITAIN'S beaches are becoming cleaner because tourism-conscious local authorities are spending more money on them. The Tidy Britain Group said yesterday that a survey of the 100 top resorts showed 91 beaches reached acceptable standards and that more than 40 were very clean.

The group said local authorities were spending almost £3.5 million a year on cleaning beaches and the results were starting to show. Sandbanks in Poole, Dorset, and Sandown on the Isle of Wight were marked at over 90 per cent. The cleanest resorts and beaches were in the South West and East Anglia, while most of those below standard were in the North West, Scotland and Wales.

The group singled out six beaches as the most improved: Cromer in Norfolk, East Loes in Cornwall, Paignton in Devon, Scarborough-South, Sheringham in Norfolk, and Rhyl, North Wales.

Dr Hay was opening Arthritis' Education Week, which aims to alert patients and GPs about treatments and to offer information about the benefits and side-effects of the drugs. She highlighted other types of therapy, including physiotherapy, occupational therapy and education from nurse specialists. The best opportunity for overcoming the disease was to use these during its early stages.

Drugs & Arthritis leaflet from Arthritis & Rheumatism Council (PO Box 177, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 7TQ; enclose SAE).

Call for action on rheumatoid arthritis

By DOMINIC KENNEDY, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

PATIENTS are being crippled by rheumatoid arthritis because their general practitioners fail to refer them for early specialist treatment, an expert said yesterday.

Research has shown that the best way to overcome the disease and to reduce disability is to attack it aggressively in the initial stages, according to Elaine Hay, consultant rheumatologist at the Haywood and Stanfield Hospital, Stoke-on-Trent. Dr Hay, of the Arthritis and Rheumatism Council, said that only a few years ago, doctors would treat rheumatoid arthritis conservatively at first. Aggressive treatment was used only when it persisted.

"Most specialists now know that attacking the disease in its very early stages is crucial," she said, and patients thought to have rheumatoid arthritis should be seen quickly by a rheumatologist.

She praised the treatment

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Captain of Cabot replica sails into storm over 'sexism'

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH



Samantha Brewster: sex shouldn't come into it

A TOP yachtsman is being accused of sexism by women Britain's leading female sailors, after he said that women were not strong enough to take part in a voyage recreating John Cabot's 15th-century discovery of Newfoundland.

David Alan Williams, a member of the crew of a New Zealand catamaran that holds the Jules Verne record for circumnavigating the world in 74 days, said a handful of women had applied for a place on board the £1.5 million replica of the three-masted ship *Matthew* but none had matched the tough requirements. "The women find the enthusiasm and skill but they could not meet the strength factor. This is a

treacherous voyage in a tiny vessel and requires physical strength."

Samantha Brewster, 29, the first woman to sail single-handed around the world from east to west against prevailing winds, said yesterday: "I am totally lost for words. On a crew it is about teamwork rather than brute strength. This is just an excuse for being sexist. Sex doesn't come into it. It is totally outrageous." She added: "This is a very unfortunate

attitude to take. I am absolutely astonished by it. This is not going to look good and they are going to get a lot of criticism."

Lisa Clayton, who circumnavigated the globe single-handed in 1995, said the decision was sad. "I don't agree with it," she said. "It is a real shame that no women are going. It seems so old-fashioned and a bit sad. I would have thought on a 20-strong crew there would be room for

both sexes. The strongest sailors are not always the best."

A spokeswoman for the Royal Yachting Association said: "Our policy is that yachting is an equal opportunity sport. With the current technology it is fitness rather than strength that matters but obviously this is an old boat. They should have told women not to apply if that was the case but obviously they couldn't because that would be sexist."

David Redfern, for the *Matthew* project, yesterday defended Mr Alan-Williams, who will captain the replica boat, and denied the selection was sexist. He said: "Five other crew members still have to be selected. So far, despite having several ladies on trial for the position, no ladies have been suitable. This is not a policy –

just the way it has so far turned out."

The *Matthew* will leave Bristol on May 2 to retrace the discovery of Newfoundland in 1497 by John Cabot, the Genoese-born Venetian navigator who was based in Bristol and claimed North America for England.

The modern crew will, like their counterparts of 500 years ago, have to face severe conditions including icebergs and gales in the North Atlantic.

The *Matthew* is expected to arrive at Bonavista, Newfoundland, on June 24 to launch a programme of celebrations. One place in the crew is being kept open in the hope of finding a candidate from the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. The Duke is patron of the *Matthew* project.

Canberra prepares to take final bow

By HARVEY ELLIOTT
TRAVEL CORRESPONDENT

MORE than 500 passengers have paid up to £34,000 each for the final 92-day round-the-world journey of *Canberra*, the cruise liner that began life ferrying British emigrants to Australia on £10 assisted passages.

The 41,000-tonne ship – known as the Great White Whale – has been in service for 36 years during which she has made 22 round-the-world cruises and carried almost a million passengers. She was also called into service during the Falklands War.

Tough new safety regulations mean that she would have had to undergo extensive refurbishment at a cost that P&O considered too prohibitive and which may not have been technically possible.

The liner leaves Southampton on Monday bound for Singapore, Hong Kong, Darwin, Brisbane and San Francisco. The final voyage – a 20-night Mediterranean cruise – will be in September.

Her future is uncertain and P&O is awaiting offers for the vessel, which was built in Belfast in 1960 at a cost of £17 million. A total of 3,400 passengers will be on board for at least part of her cruise, with one passenger making the complete trip for the eighth consecutive year.

The cost of the round-the-world trip ranges from £5,595 to £33,995. In command for the final voyage will be Captain Rory Smith, who has been appointed the first captain of *Arcadia*, P&O's new superliner, which joins the fleet in December next year as a replacement for *Canberra*.

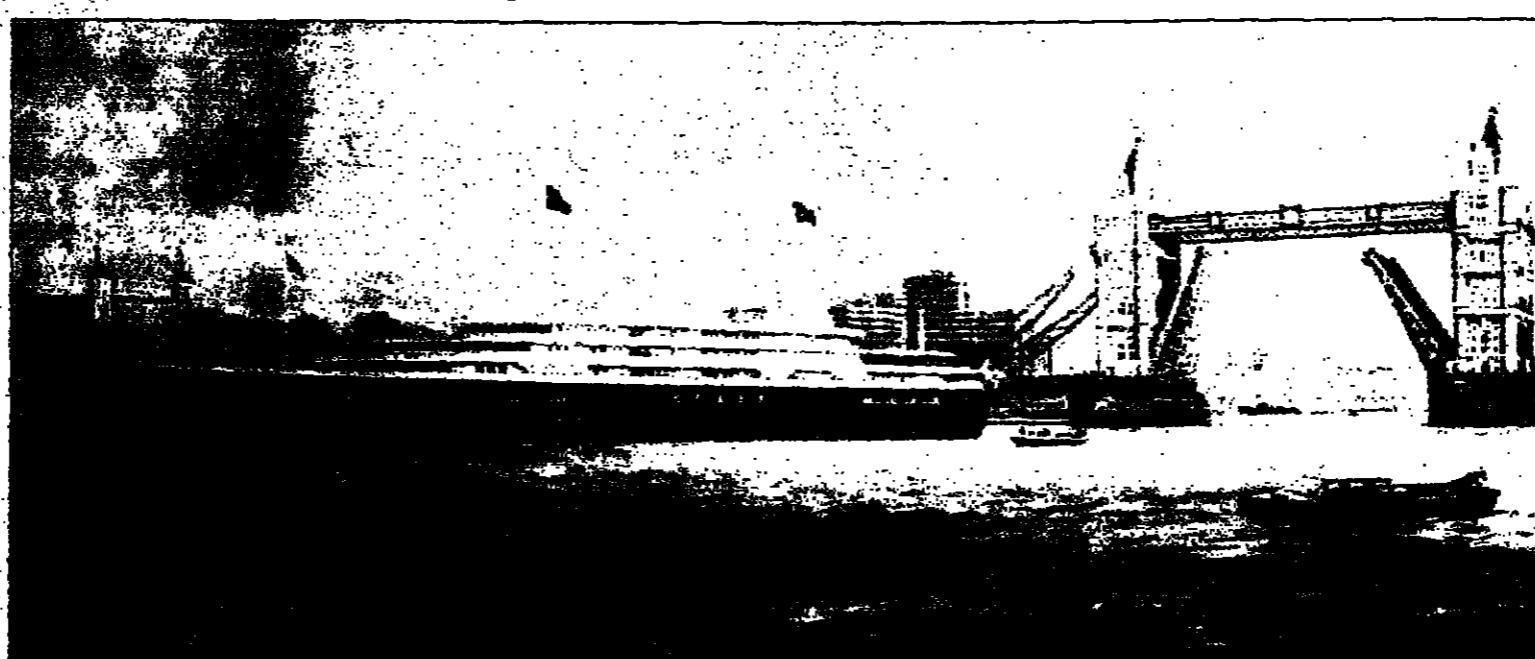
Royal yacht decision 'may be too late for millennium'

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH

BRITAIN's leading yacht designers yesterday condemned the Government's failure to make a decision on the future of the royal yacht *Britannia*. As a display of designs for a replacement vessel went on display at the London International Boat Show at Earls Court, they said that unless a decision was made immediately a new ship would not be ready in time for the millennium celebrations.

HMY Britannia will make her final voyage later this year when she sails to Hong Kong to collect the last Governor, Chris Patten. It is believed that a Cabinet committee set up to discuss the issue of a new ship has not met for nine months.

"No one is getting a decision from this Government and several dates when a decision was supposed to have been given have gone past," said Sir Donald Gosling, co-chairman



Thames view: this artist's impression from Terence Disdale Designs is among proposals on show at the London International Boat Show

of the Royal Yacht Consortium, which backs a scheme for a new vessel. He believes there is a misplaced fear in government circles that commissioning a new yacht would be seen by the public as an unnecessary extravagance and cost votes.

A lot of people might think

that the election has something to do with the failure to make a decision. But a recent newspaper poll showed that 83 per cent of the population wanted the yacht renamed or a new one built. If the Government has the guts to say 'get on with it' if they could have a vote winner."

A new yacht would have a central role to play in the millennium celebrations, he said. "It is so important to have it ready. Britain must have an 'icon' to identify worldwide and there is no better way to do that than with

a royal yacht. It would also be a big attraction moored at Greenwich."

The consortium argues that a number of the plans were for yachts that would cover their own cost, because they would be more efficient than the 44-year-old *Britannia* and could be used to promote trade.

Britannia is said to have helped to secure more than £2 billion of trade for Britain during the past 10 years.

Among the proposed new ships are the Royal Sail Training Ship, which would train young cadets. Other schemes

include a modern interpretation of the current yacht, a combined royal yacht and cruise ship, and a royal exhibition ship that could be used for royal and commercial purposes. The schemes have been estimated to cost £70-£100 million.

Andrew Buxton, chairman of Barclays Bank which is also supporting the initiative, said the Government was undoubtedly concerned about the sums involved. But he added: "We are not trying to promote a royal yacht that is extravagant. We are trying to promote

a royal yacht that will promote British industry.

"During its last voyage the royal yacht will be promoting British trade in seven different locations. In each, we will get a premier audience which you would not get otherwise. If it was just a floating trade palace we would not get the same audience, people like the catcher of the royal yacht."

He added that he was confident the yacht could be financed under the Government's Private Finance Initiative, which shares the burden with private companies.

Sea view: design by GEC Marine/Winch Projects

Vanishing tiger falls prey to poachers and profiteers

By DANIEL McGEOUGH

THE helicopter dipped low over the ravaged forests of the Borneo Valley in the former Soviet Union as the hunters who had paid handsomely for the trip leant from the open door, telescopic rifles in hand, scouring the snows for a Siberian tiger.

The airborne safari is illegal but the authorities in this remote region bordering China are virtually powerless to stop local mafia who organise such hunting trips and then sell the skins and the tiger bones themselves often for more money than they can make from drug smuggling.

The gunmen seek only the pleasure of the kill but the mafia trade in the burgeoning market for powdered tiger bone and the animal's penis, sought as a traditional Chinese cure or aphrodisiac. The



A preserved tiger's head seized in Hong Kong

tiger has existed for over two million years and at the start of this century there were eight species, totalling more than 100,000 animals, stretching between Bali and the Caspian

Sea Today fewer than 5,000 wild tigers remain and three species – the Bali, Caspian and Javan – are extinct.

The Siberian will soon join them if logging companies are allowed to continue to plunder the tiger's habitat in areas such as Primorsk territory, home to most of the last 150 of the species. The forests of Siberia contain over a fifth of all remaining forests on the planet, felling in both legal and illegal timber traders.

Until Tusk Force and other charities helped to fund Operation Amber to protect such animals, an estimated 60 Siberian tigers a year were being poached from these forests, which conservationists predicted would lead to extinction of the creature by 2000.

Undercover agents have helped to trace illegal logging operations that assist the tiger poachers and although 30 such enterprises were exposed in the Primorsk territory in 1995 the authorities have so far prosecuted no one.

Sue Fisher, head of conservation for Tusk Force, said the priority now was for more funds to help to finance the anti-poaching teams and for the Siberian tiger sanctuary that the Russian Government set up in November 1995. Moscow does not have the cash to fund it.

Tiger bones are ground up as a cure for ulcers while the brain is thought to remedy laziness and acne. Tiger penis soup sells for £500 a bowl, marketed as a health tonic.

Despite the worldwide ban on trading body parts, demand is growing for traditional medicines in much of the Far East, making a nonsense of the idea that the international community speaks with one voice in defence of this glorious animal.

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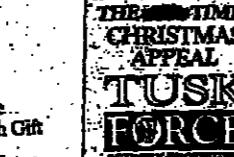
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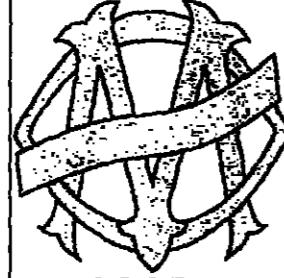
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Marseilles club run by Tapie 'used £11m for fixing matches'

FROM SUSAN BELL
IN PARIS

OLYMPIQUE Marseilles, France's former football champions, misspent more than £110 million (£11.3 million) on rigging matches and transfers under the presidency of Bernard Tapie, the bankrupt businessman and former Socialist minister. *Le Monde* said yesterday.

The corruption was said to have happened between 1987 and 1993 when the money was spent to fix matches by bribing players and referees and to lure star players to the team.

The latest revelations in the prolonged Tapie saga came from a 205-page report by the Marseilles magistrate, Pierre Philipon.

He has been investigating the club's accounts for four years.

"Olympique Marseilles had misused important sums in order to reduce, or even suppress, the hazards which invariably exist in a football match," said *Le Monde* yesterday, quoting from the weighty report in which the word corruption features frequently.

"All the means possible, including the most illegal, were used" under M Tapie's presidency, the report concluded.

used his soccer acquisition as a launchpad for other ventures and to attract politicians and business people.

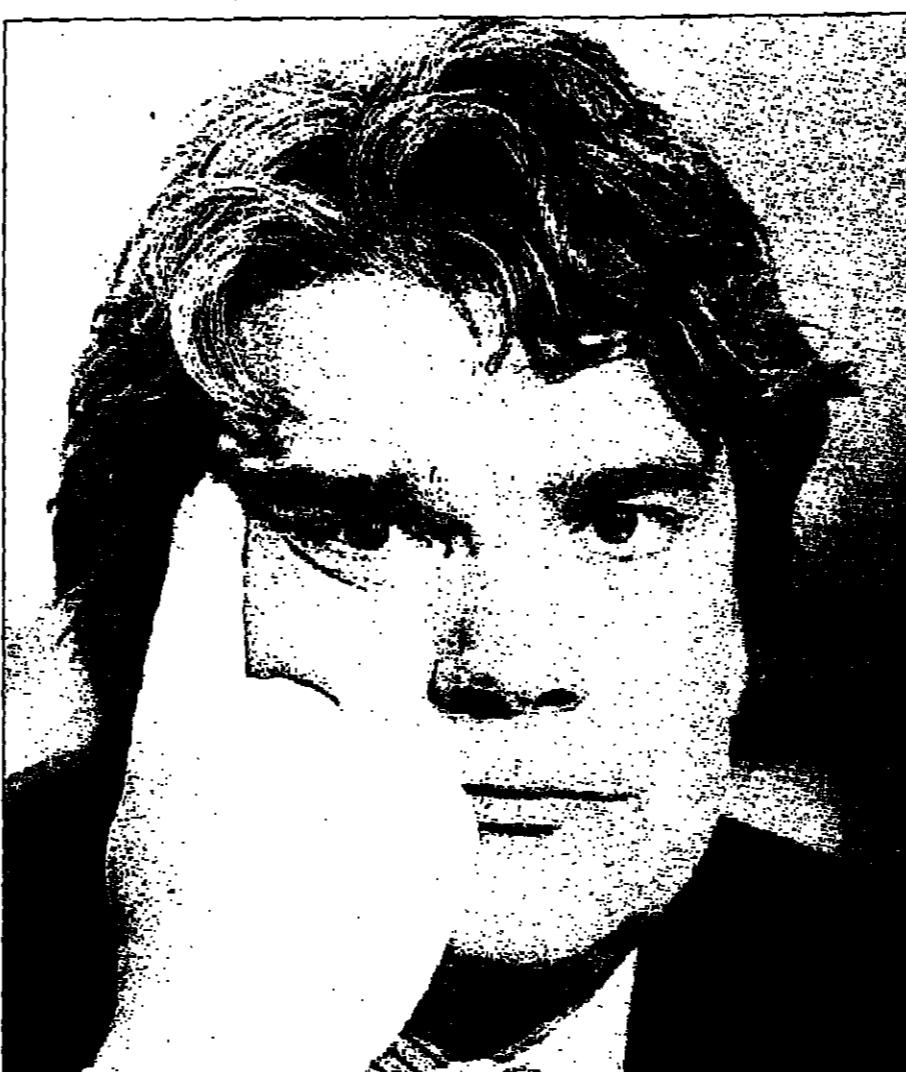
He undoubtedly invigorated Olympique Marseilles, which under his presidency dominated French and European soccer, winning the French championship five times in a row and the European title in 1993 when the club beat AC Milan 1-0.

The buccaneering entrepreneur rode on the club's success to become a national hero before dragging the team down with him into scandal and corruption.

The son of a plumber who became rich through a series of hard-nosed, asset-stripping deals in the 1980s, M Tapie was France's symbol of a self-made man in a society where it is extremely difficult to rise above the limitations of tradition and education.

According to *Le Monde*, M Philipon's report suggests that M Tapie's actions during his presidency of Olympique Marseilles were motivated by his personal ambitions to become Mayor of Marseilles.

M Tapie, who denies any knowledge of corruption in the affair, has frequently raged against the right-wing establishment, the machinations of games men have played involve a ball. For a ball is one of the few things in life that escape life's rules."



Tapie, who is said to have used "all the means possible, including the most illegal"

Soccer, wrote Jean Giraudoux, the great playwright of the 1930s, "is not so much the king of sports as it is the king of games."

"All the great games men have played involve a ball. For a ball is one of the few things in life that escape life's rules."

M Tapie may reflect that the rules now appear to have caught up with him.

■ Bakers' victory: Bakers are savouring a victory over lawsmen under a new law protecting their baguettes from cut-price rivals in a campaign to revive the fading

French appetite for bread. Up to 5,000 shops selling bread in France will have to take down "Bakery" signs under the laws in force from New Year's Day, the latest in a long series to safeguard artisans and village corner shops from the ravages of competition. (Reuters)

Gingrich likely to receive only mild reprimand

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

A WELL-TIMED leak from Capitol Hill yesterday indicated that Newt Gingrich has every chance of keeping his job as House Speaker.

Sources said two Democrats and two Republicans who investigated his breach of ethics will unanimously recommend only a reprimand. This is a mild punishment that would not bar him from running for re-election to the Speaker's chair, or the harsher penalty of censure.

Mr Gingrich's defence team was said to have negotiated the reprimand recommendation as part of a plea bargain before Christmas. In exchange, he admitted that he had violated the rules of the House of Representatives in connection with the funding of



Gingrich: good chance of remaining Speaker

Bombay takes aim at great expectorations

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

BOMBAY, which has confused everybody by changing its name to Mumbai, is further stepping out of line by banning one of the two most ubiquitous of male habits in India: spitting. The other is public urination; that may be attended to later.

Expectation is begun young: boys barely old enough to walk can be heard practising guttural sounds, which are regarded as macho. Spitting knows no class barriers and is as commonplace among urban dwellers as in villages where everybody does it.

In Delhi, spitting among office workers is so common that often there are spittoons under lifts and on the stairs. The capital is trying to reduce smoking in public places and keeps threatening to introduce prohibition, leaving little time to ponder a spitting ban. It is also trying to deal with public urination by building more urinals.

The Indian spitting culture probably originates from the yogic belief in releasing anything nasty from the body as quickly as possible.

■ Bombay: Cinemas in India's film capital shut their doors, calling an indefinite strike that could cripple one of the world's largest movie industries. The strike at 1,300 cinemas was over the decision by the state government of Maharashtra to double the tax on cinema tickets. (AP)

World's poshest B&B plays host to party fat cats

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

WHEN the Democratic Party's biggest donors or fund raisers visit Washington, their favourite place to stay is not the Four Seasons or the Ritz-Carlton, but the White House.

Investigations into the Democrats' campaign finances disclose that President and Mrs Clinton have often invited six-figure contributors to spend the night in the Lincoln Bedroom or the Queen's Bedroom in the White House.

Hollywood has been well represented among the bed-and-breakfast guests. They include Barbra Streisand, Steven Spielberg, the producer David Geffen, Tom Hanks, Chevy Chase and Richard Dreyfuss, all perennial Clinton fund raisers. Mr Dreyfuss said that the President woke him at 7.20am for a chat about politics. The actor also confessed that before checking out, he telephoned his children just to brag that he was calling from the Lincoln Bedroom.

That is where President Lincoln signed the proclamation ending slavery. The Queen's Bedroom was named by the Kennedys after the many royals who slept there, including the Queen.

Not all guests fill party coffers. Occupants of the Lincoln Bedroom have also included the Clintons' former cook from Arkansas, a theology student and his wife, the President's pastor and other old friends.

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Portillo promises Britain will fight 'global aggressors'

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

BRITAIN is ready to commit its armed forces to supporting peace and fighting aggression anywhere in the world, Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, said in Port Stanley yesterday.

The Government was committed to defending the Falkland Islands and maintaining their security indefinitely, he added. "There is no caveat, exception or time limit to that commitment."

He said in a speech that Britain still had a global role. It took its responsibilities seriously and was ready to "match words with action" because it is a civilised nation. Royal Navy ships carried the image of Britain to the world's ports as well as "the unspoken message that Britain is concerned about security wherever it might be threatened".

Mr Portillo's pledge was an elaboration of the justification he gave the Commons in the autumn of Britain's readiness to send an intervention force to Zaire. It also had echoes of John Kennedy's inauguration promise that America would "pay any price, bear any burden, meet any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival of success and liberty".

Mr Portillo said Britain was ready to commit its armed forces to conflict when necessary. "We commit to peace support and humanitarian operations, even in places far from home, for simple and yet fundamental reasons. We are a civilised nation. We recognise our humanitarian obligations. We have the military experience and capability to help. We respond out of our

Manpower cuts curb ambitions

WHILE Mr Portillo has every reason to feel confident that Britain's forces can play a significant role in peacekeeping missions or regional conflicts, manpower cuts since the end of the Cold War will limit its global policing ambitions.

(Michael Evans writes: "The Army is down to 104,000 trained soldiers and will drop below the 100,000 mark early next century. Support services have also been pruned. However, Britain will rarely, if ever, have to act on its own, so Mr Portillo can afford to be generous in its campaign to secure sovereignty over the islands."

Mr Portillo's readiness to commit 50,000 men and women to the 1982 Falklands conflict showed that the country was capable of acting if necessary. Nowadays, however, it acted more often through international organisations. "Despite the spread of democracy over the last decade, parts of the world remain prone to xenophobia, ethnic conflict and religious intolerance," he said.

British defence planning took account of more than 50 potential crisis points across the world, including the Balkans, the trans-Caucasus, Algeria, Libya and Iraq. Outside

Cycle king Induráin quits the road at 32

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN
IN SAN SEBASTIAN

THE champion cyclist Miguel Induráin, arguably the greatest living idol in Spain, plunged his nation into sadness yesterday by announcing his retirement from competitive racing.

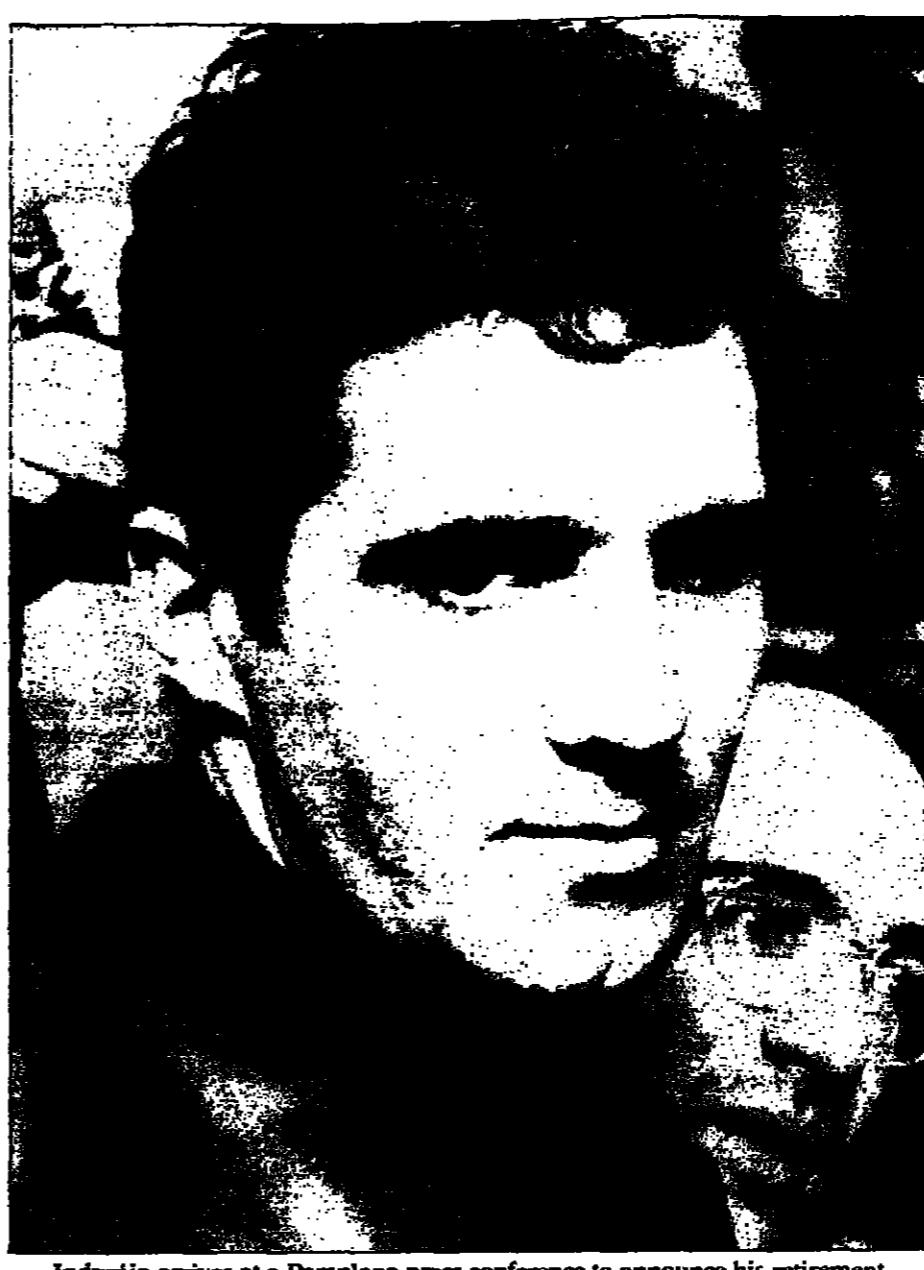
"Miguelín", or Big Miguel, announced his departure in a press conference in his native Pamplona, so ending months of fevered speculation in Spanish newspapers, bars and homes over the future of the Basque superstar.

Induráin, 32, who won the Tour de France five times consecutively from 1991, had been out of sorts since he lost last year's race. A victory then, which virtually nobody had dared to bet against, would have given him an unprecedented sixth title. Later in the year he shocked all Spain by dropping out midway in the Vuelta de Espana, or the "tour" of Spain.

"Our interest in the South Atlantic is tangible and permanent and we shall wish to broaden and deepen our ties with the countries of the region, based on the clarity of our position regarding the sovereignty of the islands," he said.

His remarks, clearly aimed at Argentina, followed an earlier statement in which he rejected calls by President Menem for shared sovereignty over the islands. However, he welcomed what he called the conciliatory tone of Señor Menem's remarks.

Military planners are asking whether Britain needs to keep such a large force in the South Atlantic at a time when Argentina has promised that it would not use force again in its campaign to secure sovereignty over the islands.



Indurain arrives at a Pamplona press conference to announce his retirement

A recent poll indicated his compatriots think that Induráin is the most accomplished Spanish sportsman of all time. Yet he is far more than just a sporting hero, his acclaim transcending all boundaries of profession, region, class and age. Opinion polls indicate he is even more popular than King Juan Carlos.

After each of his Tour de

France triumphs, newspaper editorials exhorted Spaniards to "be like Induráin". Political commentators have been known to call for the "Induráinisation" of Spain, by which they mean an end to inefficiency, and a greater degree of decency, integrity and professionalism in the workforce.

Politically, as well, in the strife-torn Basque country,

Induráin has been a model, always emphasising that he is "both Basque and Spanish". It is refreshing also that a Basque should be so warmly embraced across the length and breadth of the country. He is a quiet family man — a kind of Spanish "blonde next door" — and his shy, unshowy manner is much appreciated.

Induráin's career as a cyclist began fortuitously, when

Italy told to tighten migrant entry law

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS
IN ROME

ITALIAN authorities demanded reform of the nation's liberal immigration laws yesterday after more North Africans bluffed their way onto the southern island of Lampedusa.

Officers from the Finance Guard patrolling the sea between Italy and Tunisia on New Year's Eve stopped a trawler carrying 38 would-be immigrants as it was making its way to the shores of Lampedusa ten miles away.

Under an accord between Tunis and Rome six weeks ago, the police normally would have asked Tunisian authorities to escort the vessel back to Sfax, the port it left after each passenger paid the equivalent of a million lire (£400) for the voyage.

But the group claimed they had been at sea without food and water for ten days and pleaded to be allowed to land at Lampedusa. They also claimed that three other shipmates had died from hunger and exposure to freezing temperatures between December 27 and December 30.

The Mayor of Lampedusa, Salvatore Martello, said the account was almost certainly fabricated to allow them to land. Under Italian law they will be transported to Sicily where they will be ordered to face repatriation within ten days. However, they will be free to move in the meantime and are sure to head for France and Germany, he said.

"The uninterrupted chain of clandestine immigration has reacted to the measures adopted by the Italian Government," Signor Martello said. Forty Tunisians intercepted by a police vessel were allowed ashore on Wednesday.

Sport, page 42

Easy election win for Singapore rulers

FROM REUTER IN SINGAPORE

OPPOSITION parties in Singapore retained at least two seats in the 83-member parliament but the ruling People's Action Party (PAP) outdistanced one of its main opponents as results came in from yesterday's general election.

Goh Chok Tong, the Prime Minister, and his PAP were assured of retaining power because opponents contested only 36 of the 83 seats. Of the first 31 seats announced last night, the PAP took 29.

It was not clear whether the opposition would match or improve on the four seats won in the last election. The Singapore Democratic Party (SDP), which held three seats, has been shut out of the next

Zaire gold town falls to rebels

Rebels trying to topple President Mobutu of Zaire seized the northeast town of Bumbu and nearby gold mines in a 12-hour battle with government forces (Our Foreign Staff writes). Hundreds died in the Christmas Eve offensive.

In neighbouring Rwanda authorities arrested as genocide suspects more than 2,500 Hutus who were among about 460,000 refugees who returned home from Tanzania.

Out of prison

Brussels: A Belgian court freed Alain Van der Biest, an ex-minister held in connection with the 1991 murder of fellow Socialist politician, André Cools. But the charges have not been dropped. (Reuters)

Waves injure 27

Redondo Beach: Storm-whipped waves 10ft high swept 27 people off a jetty at this California beach, leaving many with neck and back injuries. All were rescued by lifeguards. (AP)

Java gas threat

Jakarta: A crater has opened up and is spewing poisonous gas in the Dieng Plateau of central Java, where a similar discharge killed nearly 150 people in 1979, the official Antara news agency said. (AP)

Border alert

Bonin: Germany is to crack down on smugglers of illegal immigrants by boosting the number of border police near Poland and the Czech Republic from 4,700 to 6,200, the Interior Ministry said. (AFP)

Corruption war

Hanoi: Communist Vietnam's leaders intensified their war of words on corruption, saying moral degeneration among party cadres had exposed a flank for enemies to sabotage the revolution. (Reuters)

Imperial hope

Tokyo: Almost 60,000 people visited the Imperial Palace to wish a happy new year to Emperor Akihito, 63. He said: "I pray for happiness for Japanese people as well as those in the rest of the world." (AP)

Festive chop

Brussels: A thief stole a sheep from a Christmas crib in the western Belgian city of Ghent and slaughtered it on the spot, the police said. "Looks like someone who wanted a meal," an officer said. (Reuters)

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Food for thought

Why therapy does not work

Clinical psychologist Dr Dorothy Rowe explains why, for many patients, psychotherapy cannot provide a solution

In my salad days when I was green in judgment I believed that universal enlightenment was possible. I saw that the body of human stupidity far outweighed the body of human knowledge and wisdom with the result that just about all the vastness of human suffering derived from what we do to one another and to ourselves. However, I believed that the forces of unreason (the kind of thinking that results when fear, greed, vanity and the desire for power are allowed to prevail over logic and scientific thinking) could be exposed for what they were and thus defeated. I thought that psychotherapy would be the means by which this would happen. Through psychotherapy we would come to understand that all we know is what we have constructed, and that out of this understanding we would develop new ways of living together based on tolerance, mutual dignity and knowledge informed by the search for truth rather than the fulfilment of desires.

Now I know that this has not occurred and might never occur. I no longer see psychotherapy as being as profound as I once thought it was. Moreover, the forces of unreason are not so easily routed, and, when they do suffer a defeat the forces quickly regroup and capture other territory. This happens because not only do these forces serve to keep power in the hands of those who would be powerful (in political thought such people are usually grouped together as the Church and the State) but they often secretly subvert those who believe that they are in the vanguard of enlightenment. Enlightenment requires a person to look with clear, unwavering eyes at the reality of our existence but, as T.S. Eliot said: "Human kind cannot bear very much reality."

When reality becomes too much we can comfort ourselves with fantasies, which is wise provided we remember that the stories are fantasies. If we fail to do this, if we think that our fantasies are real and true, we join the forces of unreason. In the ranks of therapists there are some who do just this. They develop a logic that conveniently ignores those constructions which do not fit their theories and thus they collude with the forces of unreason. Therapists whose model of therapy includes terms like transpersonal, spiritual, the soul, the religious, are prone to do this. Freud ignored much of the actual brutality his clients had suffered and many of his disciples have done the same. Such collusion seems to go beyond a

mere failure of nerve. It seems instead to be an inability to understand and accept the peculiarity of our existence.

This peculiarity is that, while the world we live in seems to be solid and real and shared with others, what we each experience is our individual construction. We can imagine events that occur without any relationship to us, but what we have is no knowledge about such events but theories. In fact, everything we know is a theory, a construction, and this construction is inside our heads.

When I lecture about this I often quote or refer to the work of the scientist Ian Stewart when he wrote: "The problem is that human beings cannot obtain an objective view of the universe. Everything we experience is mediated by our brains. Even our vivid impression that the world is 'out there' is a wonderful trick. The nerve cells in our brains create a simplified copy of reality inside our head, and then persuade us that we are inside it, rather than the other way around."

I then describe how, while it seems to me that I am here and my audience over there, actually what I am experiencing is inside my head. I can only hope that whatever is going on bears some resemblance to my construction. I go on to say that the same process is occurring in each person, and that if it were possible to take our pictures out of our heads, we would see that each picture is different. This is because our construction can come from nowhere other than our past experience, and no two people have the same experience.

As I describe this process I watch the expressions of my audience. Some people look mildly interested, unsurprised because I am not telling them anything they do not know, but others look confused, even anxious. They have never heard such an account of experience before.

Because all that we have are our interpretations, we are free to choose to acknowledge that what we have are theories and that we can use all means to test these theories, or we can insist that our theories are accurate representations of the truth. Of course, acknowledging that all you know is a theory which might or might not approximate to reality requires the courage to live with uncertainty, and many people (some therapists included) lack such courage.

Teaching psychologists and highly qualified psychotherapists I find the hardest chore of all. Many come with a set



"When reality becomes too much we can comfort ourselves with fantasies, which is wise provided we remember that the stories are fantasies"

tence? Over the past 20 years I have taught — or tried to teach — this to a wide range of people. I have found that some people have no difficulty in understanding the peculiarity of their existence while others remain baffled and confused or dismiss out of hand what I say. Most of the nuclear physicists I have encountered find what I say blindingly obvious. After all, physicists have been dealing with this issue since the 1920s. It is other scientists who want to believe that somehow in doing science they step outside themselves, don the white coat of objectivity and perceive reality directly. They find the thought that they cannot measure anything absolutely unacceptable. Many are psychologists.

Teaching psychologists and highly qualified psychotherapists I find the hardest chore of all. Many come with a set of mental boxes, which they call psychological theories. As I talk I see what I am saying being popped into one of the boxes and the lid snapped tight. To pass examinations in psychology and psychotherapy you have to know the current theories and their accepted refutation — or supposed refutation, because often the refutation is no more than name-calling, and there is nothing well trained psychologists like better than polysyllabic abstract nouns. Such words allow the user to ignore experience, especially experiences that challenge the psychologist's favourite theory.

Of course, psychologists and psychotherapists are not the only people who pop everything into a theory box. Listen to the pundits on Radio Four's *The Moral Maze* and you will hear them doing the same. Thus lived experience is ignored and what is enjoyed is the comfort of prejudice. As Freud once observed, intellectualisation is the most reliable of the defences.

As small children we are well aware that our way of seeing things is very different from that of our parents, but unfortunately for most of us we are not allowed to hold on to such an understanding. Instead, we are told that our individual truths are silly, childish, wrong, wicked. If we grow up believing that there is just one right way of thinking, feeling and acting we lead miserable lives because we have lost the one freedom that makes our life survivable, even happy and glorious. Such freedom comes from understanding that although we can control very little of the circumstances of our life we are always free to change how we interpret those circumstances.

The turning point in psychotherapy is

the moment when the person actually reaches such an understanding. This is an understanding that the person now knows through and through. It saturates and transforms their entire structure of meaning. If the person has only an intellectual grasp of this understanding, there is nothing gained. Unfortunately there are many psychotherapists who pay lip-service to such an understanding but who imply that they are in possession of some Absolute Truth.

Thus are those psychotherapists who want to be powerful, seduced by the forces of unreason. It may be that the psychotherapist wants to secure a good income, or become famous, or simply assure himself of his self-worth by making his clients better. But as long as the psychotherapist is saying to the client "I know best. Do it my way", the psychotherapist has yielded to the forces of unreason.

Hence psychotherapy has not transformed the world. Far too many psychotherapists have been seduced in this way. Such psychotherapists can be found in all schools of therapy. Psychoanalysts were seduced right from the start.

Unreason seeks to satisfy desires and to do so must frustrate the search for what is. Science seeks to establish what is, irrespective of our desires. Psychotherapy has not transformed and enlightened the world or even a small part of it because in seeking to understand ourselves we fail to be scientific. Meaning is our being. We have nothing else other than the meaning we create.

Such an understanding should be the basis of psychology and psychotherapy. But it is not. In the 1960s an American

psychologist called Rosenthal published his research which showed that if teachers thought certain children were intelligent the children behaved intelligently, that test results differed according to gender, and that psychologists got the results they expected even when the subjects were rats. In short, he showed that it is not what happens to us which determines what we think, feel and do but how we interpret what happens to us. I remember a lecturer saying: "If his results are only halfway accurate we'll have to do every experiment again." I thought she was right and that psychologists should start again. But they did not. Status, as ever, was more important than truth.

It would be possible to construct a psychology and psychotherapy based on the knowledge that we construct what we know. Here we would recognise that emotion is not separate from cognition but is a way of creating meaning. We would understand that communication is not a matter of passing something from one person to another but a process of individual interpretations, full of opportunities for mutual misunderstandings. We would elaborate the methods of science in the testing of our personal, political, artistic and scientific theories. We would search for shared patterns of constructions and delineate the variations of individual constructions. In all, we would celebrate the creativity of our inventions, for we would know that if there were one fixed reality and that was what each of us saw how dreary our lives would be.

If only we would do this.

Must the meagre vanities of conscience and the desire for power always prevail?

Dorothy Rowe, 1996. Taken from *Living Together*, eds David Kershaw & Nell Small, Quartet Books, £9.

Jane Gordon finds herself succumbing to a surplus of superstition

THERE is something about the new year that makes me uncharacteristically superstitious. In the past few days I have found myself superstitiously checking through the "year ahead" predictions of every astrologer you can name searching for the future of my dreams.

Because, while part of me knows that — as Shakespeare so succinctly put it — "our fate lies not in our stars but in ourselves", another part of me yearns to believe in some preordained destiny.

Indeed, it occurred to me recently that as we move towards the millennium — becoming ever more sophisticated and technologically advanced — so, simultaneously, we have become more and more obsessed with looking back over our shoulders to a time when the only science we knew was based on magic, myth and superstition.

Instead of putting our faith in the considerable achievements of the present day we prefer to depend on the dubious counsel of contemporary soothsayers, sages and star-gazers who pull us back to a time of ignorance.

In fact this year, as well as checking my Chinese horoscope, my numerology and the apparently all-important progress of the Comet Hale Bopp through my star sign, I have been looking at my Feng Shui — the latest "ancient science" to obsess neurotic over-indulged Westerners.

I have been wondering, for instance, whether or not my desk faces in the "right" direction, whether my garden

Which runes shall I read?



Consulting the oracle

Shui. One perceptive friend, who runs her own clothing business, was recently persuaded by a professional Feng Shui practitioner to repaint the exterior of her shop in red and gold, the colours of prosperity, and to leave a crystal bowl of water by the till to magnify her takings. Another has removed all the mirrors from her house to relieve the "negative influences" they reflect.

It is, of course, pure mumbo-jumbo: the kind of nonsense that for centuries has held back mankind and prevented individuals from achieving their full potential. How can a rational person possibly believe that the position of a mirror, a bed or a table in their home could manipulate their "cosmic chi" so that they can achieve greater success and happiness? But then how could the Duchess of York have been taken in by Madame Vassos's ability to foresee her future from beneath a blue triangle?

Why do I still want to put my faith in the curious notion that the journey of a comet through space can make me healthier, wealthier and more fulfilled throughout 1997?

Perhaps it is because in an age when scientific achievements make magic look ordinary, when my PC can do

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Philip Howard



■ How do you rate non-PC stories, children?
a) Super or b) Smashing

A survey indicates that *Matilda* is the most honest film in town for the four to six-year-old cohorts. This is as scientific as more expensive opinion polls. The sample may be smaller, but it is sounder because it was sampled by myself, not by street-corner bores with clipboards and silly questions. And the survey shows that little boys prefer the horrible revenge taken by a dear little schoolgirl on her ogre headmistress to spotted dogs or toy astronauts, or even speaking piglets. And when the ogre swings a child round by her plait as though throwing the hammer, and hurled her through a window, the gags of delighted horror drowned even the munching of popcorn in the local Odeon.

So my Pops-straw poll confirms the solemn one done by researchers at Surrey University. After extensive studies of 9,000 children, they have concluded that children do not care a popcorn whether their books are politically correct or not. Very few thought it important that their books should reflect their age, sex, colour, class or country of origin. Their favourite author was Roald Dahl, the subversive godfather of *Matilda*. Enid Blyton came second.

"Gosh, I do think it's *mean*," said George fiercely. "All these horrid critics are so beastly about Aunt Enid and our adventures. It's not our fault that we Famous Five are all white and polite (most of the time) and come from a nice *Home Counties* family and have a dog called Timmy." "Don't be rude, George," said her mother. "And anyway, the unkind critics don't seem to affect Aunt Enid's sales." "Woo," said Timmy.

"Gosh," said George. "But I do agree with teacher about one thing. That *Matilda* girl of Mr Dahl's is *rude*. I think the children who voted for her rather than us must have been jolly badly brought up. And his *Twits* are simply *awful*." "Perhaps the children were just teasing the polisters," said her mother. "But children do not simply copy what they read. They read to escape and adventure and float their imaginations. I remember that when I was your age, children were divided between the naughty ones who liked William and the Outlaws and that dreadful Billy Bunter, who came in a comic that we were forbidden to look at, and the good ones who preferred *Swallows and Amazons*. I even knew a boy who liked *Angela Brazil* better than any of them."

"Grown-ups have always disapproved of their children's reading," said George's father, looking up from his *Times*. "Once upon a time, the only stories for children came from the Bible and mythology. And you can see that those were not very nice from the wall paintings in church, and from the time when Uncle Quentin came up from Kirrin Island to take you to the National Gallery. All sorts of violence and fibs and murder, and goings-on that were even more unsuitable for the nursery bookcase."

"And when the Romantics started to write books especially for children," said George's mother, "they were not much better. I think Grimms' fairy-tales are sadistic. And Hans Andersen is not much better. Our native British tradition of children's stories about rabbits and other small furry animals may be anthropomorphic. But rabbits are safer."

"I am not sure about that," said George's father. "There is a decidedly Freudian subtext to Alice, and some deconstructionists find Freud even in *Narnia*. If you lift up any of the classic children's texts you can find creepy-crawlies underneath."

"What's anthropomorphism?" asked George.

"Aunt Enid would say that it was too long a word," explained her father. "But I suppose it means that children should be allowed to adventure where they want in their reading and their imaginations. And if they want to treat their teddy bears and piglets as people, that is one way to learn the difference between bears of little brain and child-reading-experts of little brain. Children are going to read what they want, anyway. And if they choose to read about trains middle-class twerps like us, who are we to complain? We may lead them on to more satisfying adventures. Reading is like the escalator on the Underground. It leads you up to secret gardens and magic casements. And the journey would be no fun if there were not some spooky attics and saucy advertisements along the way."

The fall of President Milosevic could herald a new Balkan democracy — or chaos, argues Misha Glenny

Loosening the grip of Serbia's iron man

People in the former Yugoslavia never experienced the rush of collective joy which accompanied the collapse of communism in Berlin, Prague or Bucharest. For in Yugoslavia, the events of 1989 stirred up a whirlpool of constitutional chaos and destruction which swallowed up millions of innocents. Its vortex lay in Serbia.

The demographic spread of Serbs in the former Yugoslavia enabled the unscrupulous élites of Serbia and Croatia to indulge in a conflict which led to the annihilation of the Croatian periphery and then all of Bosnia. A Yugoslav friend remarked in 1991: "This war started in Serbia and it will end in Serbia." The vortex is now imploding.

In many respects, Serbia proper is now undergoing its 1989 revolution. President Milosevic succeeded in postponing the event seven years ago by transforming the fears and insecurities of ordinary Serbs into a frenzy of nationalist hatred.

Over the past two centuries, Serbia and the Serbs have suffered from a curious schizophrenia. On the one hand, Serbian nationalism has reflected the classic inferiority complex of small nations; it perceives itself as the victim of unscrupulous imperial power, be this Ottoman, German or, latterly, American. These marauding powers use their local lackeys, be they Croatian, Bosnian or Albanian, as a stick with which to beat the Serbs. On the other hand, in regional struggles Serbia has often tried to play the role which it imputes to the great powers — deploying superior force to resolve territorial issues in its favour.

Slobodan Milosevic was unable to resolve this contradiction. Having

started the Serbs on a programme of nationalist expansion, he found himself isolated by the international community. He dropped his opportunistic nationalism and presided over a massive defeat in Croatia and a partial defeat in Bosnia. Traumatised by war and international sanctions, regarded by the outside world as parishes, ordinary Serbs are now waking up. Why did this happen? Who is responsible for making their lives such a misery? Mr Milosevic must now pick up a very expensive tab.

The mass opposition to his rule, which extends beyond Belgrade into dozens of towns and cities across the country, is the first sustained outburst of democratic sentiment from below in the current Balkan crisis. In contrast to the nationalism which so poisoned the country in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the demonstrations in Serbia are not being organised by a power-hungry clique, despite attempts by Mr Milosevic's ruling party to portray them in this light.

But the Serbian President is no longer in a position to play the nationalist card by implying that dark external enemies want once again to destroy the Serbs. Since he left the Croatian Serbs to hang and twist in the wind, nobody believes

any more that he is a resolute defender of Serbian national interests. Apparent disquiet about Mr Milosevic in the Yugoslav military (another organisation which the Serbian President has systematically abused) is a striking indication of how his authority is slipping. Nor is the international community fooled. The leopard has changed his spots too often for Washington, London or Bonn to consider him a reliable partner.

This could be the end. But Mr Milosevic is not yet buried and he is a far more adept operator than Nicolae Ceausescu, the Romanian dictator with whom several commentators have compared the Serbian President in the past few weeks. More importantly, the demonstrations in Belgrade and dozens of other Serbian cities are not merely a belated anti-Communist revolution.

Undoubtedly, there are parallels with 1989. But the violent destabilisation of Yugoslavia over the past five years means that the assault on Mr Milosevic's tottering edifice has more profound implications for the Balkans. Serbia is still involved in varying degrees with the internal affairs of

Croatia, Bosnia and Macedonia. And it has a long-term domestic problem in Kosovo, where a restless Albanian population forms the majority. Kosovo may yet lead to war.

As the demonstrations grew in strength throughout December, the world media began examining the credentials of the protesters' two most influential leaders, Zoran Djindjic of the Democratic Party and Vuk Draskovic, head of the Serbian Renewal Movement. The *New York Times* implied that the former's connections with the Bosnian Serbs augured ill for the Dayton peace process. Some Western diplomats have voiced a preference for the devil they know, suggesting that Mr Milosevic's fall could trigger another round of Balkan chaos.

This misses the point. Mr Milosevic did not sign the Dayton agreement on his own behalf but on behalf of the rump Yugoslav state. New leaders would have no right to revise these accords unilaterally. In addition, the Zajedno coalition which co-ordinates the demonstrations is a very heterogeneous alliance. This diversity greatly reduces the possibility of capricious acts which might destabilise the Balkans again in the

event of Mr Milosevic losing power.

The insistence of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe that Mr Milosevic restore the results of the November local elections is absolutely correct and not an unwarranted interference. Mr Milosevic has been caught red-handed with his fingers in the till of democracy. The OSCE is not demanding his resignation, merely that he should respect principles which are non-negotiable if he wants to achieve his stated goal of reintegration into the European mainstream.

Should the Serbian President accept the democratic will of Serbs, it will probably start a steady erosion of his influence. If, however, he flouts the demands both of the Opposition and the international community, Serbia will again find itself isolated, perhaps provoking the dreadful vortex into turning.

There is no absolute guarantee that the Opposition will contribute to peaceful solutions in Bosnia or in Kosovo. But Serbia still holds the key to stability in the Balkans and the devolution of power away from Mr Milosevic's Socialist Party and the uncompromising neo-Communists led by his wife, Mirjana Markovic, would represent a tremendous encouragement to other democrats in the region. It is not just Serbia which groans under autocracy — in varying degrees, Croatia, Bosnia, Montenegro, Albania and Bulgaria suffer under the arbitrary rule of political and economic mafias. If their grip is not loosened, the Balkans will be left behind as the new millennium approaches.

The author's book *The Fall of Yugoslavia* is published by Penguin, £7.99

No such thing as a free lunch

Why do the greedy succumb to promises of wealth, or just something for nothing?

It is well known that a fool and his money are soon parted. But there are so many fools as to keep the fires of folly and ignorance (particularly ignorance) merrily burning night and day?

I am sorry to say that the answer is a resounding yes, because my theme today is not just pointing to the fools, it is the greater, much greater, theme of greed. For the world is sprinkled with those who covet money more than anything else on earth, and will do anything, sometimes including murder, to get it.

Now I did not come here to tell the world that some people are crooked and some are greedy and — alas — some are foolish, and many, many are ignorant. There always were, and there always will be, people who love money more than their lives.

What I am writing about is human nature, something that I have studied throughout my life with astonishment, pity, horror, laughter, disgust, pain,

greed, smiling as you do. To wish to have money is not in itself something bad. But take an absurd analogy: would you wade across a pool that was known to harbour crocodiles? And at night?

I repeat: it is greed, yes, but it is not just greed. It is something much deeper and older. Once upon a time, a mordant man was a very special one. I remember from my childhood the golden sovereign that dangled from my grandfather's watch chain, even though from time to time the whole family came close to being an empty larder.

But what of this next kind of greed? Do you still say that it is not only greed? Did you read about the story of what happened at Sheekey's? Sheekey's is a

dozen thousand pounds are quite a bit of the ready, particularly when it is all very iffy — very iffy indeed. And yet these scammers raked in the stuff as though it was mowing time in the fields, and the scammed never asked for their money back until every scrap of it had disappeared — and disappeared forever.

I have sometimes asked the doddled person what was in his or her mind when he or she passed over a substantial chunk of money which was never seen again. The answer was always the same: They looked very honest.

Now it is easy to make a face and say "greed," smiling as you do. To wish to have money is not in itself something bad. But take an absurd analogy: would you wade across a pool that was known to harbour crocodiles? And at night?

I repeat: it is greed, yes, but it is not just greed. It is something much deeper and older. Once upon a time, a mordant man was a very special one. I remember from my childhood the golden sovereign that dangled from my grandfather's watch chain, even though from time to time the whole family came close to being an empty larder.

But what of this next kind of greed? Do you still say that it is not only greed? Did you read about the story of what happened at Sheekey's? Sheekey's is a



fish restaurant in the heart of London, and has been there for 100 years. For such an unbroken line, surely something in the way of rejoicing was needed, and what better rejoicing can there be than a bite and a sup? So for one day, Sheekey's would serve its usual platters at 1950 prices. And Sheekey's played up splendidly.

Now, Sheekey's can hold roughly 300 people at a go and a squeeze. Sheekey's had orders for 300 people with steamed cod and parsley sauce for 25p, or deep-fried mussels in orange and basil and bread-and-butter pudding for 15p, the idea being that the 300 would come, eat and go, in an orderly manner without getting enormous numbers of eaters eating exactly at the same time. Neat,

eh? Not quite. Because the queue started at 10 o'clock in the morning, and when Sheekey's opened, there was already a queue of more than a thousand people, waiting for a bite and a sup for nothing. Well, nearly nothing.

The queue began to be restless; so restless that the police were called. Remember that it was only about some steamed cod and bread-and-butter pudding (both of which I detest, incidentally). The manageress, Angela Falcone, explained at 3pm that there was no food left and added: "It was absolute chaos. I could not believe how angry some people were."

I dare say, And one man in the queue said: "They made an offer and should honour it. We haven't even been offered

a coffee." How shocking. But if you looked at the newspaper photographs of the queue, you could see a substantial chunk of it. Whether the chaos that the manageress spoke of had started when the picture does not reveal. But what can be immediately seen is that the people in the queue are not tramps, down-and-outs, thugs or pickpockets. They are decent men and women, decently clothed and obviously able to pay what Sheekey's usually charges. What does that mean?

It means, surely, that ordinary people, not hungry or desperate for a pair of worn-out shoes, are steeped in the culture of "It's not actually stealing, so it's all right if no one is looking over our shoulder, and anyway we have to stay in the queue for hours on end".

That is the plebeian version, and we smile at it. We can smile, because we are not involved in the lunacies of, say, Morgan Grenfell. Remember Morgan Grenfell? I do, and I shook my head in wonder, but that is because none of my money was in Morgan Grenfell. And as for the Deutsche Bank (which came to the rescue of Morgan Grenfell), that most perfectly sound and honourable institution could say that "Deutsche" Bank is understood to be looking for an outsider with impeccable credentials. Well yes. But when the laughter had died down the nonsense had not.

Oh, don't think these things happen in Britain only. Money is coveted wherever head is on the banknotes, and this time they were Italian ones. The head of the Italian state railroad system, one of the best-known figures in his country, has been arrested and detained for questioning on a broad range of criminal charges, including embezzlement, corruption, fraud, abuse of office, false accounting and criminal association. And criminal association. Wow.

There are thieves and burglars and robbers and scammers, and I can understand them, or I think I can. Embezzlement, too, and even the marshy waters of fraud. But what I cannot understand is the men who have great quantities of money — enough to keep them in every comfort forever — who break the law to get even more.

The cadgers of Sheekey's are really in the same boat, though they would deny it. And who are the men and women who lick their lips when they hear of a thing called a pyramid or a scam? They are the people who are about to be rooked, and many of them deserve it.

Bachininen chen shi tschen. That is a Yiddish phrase meaning literally "If it's free, it doesn't matter if it sinks". But that does not encompass Sheekey's thousand-long queue.



Piggy in the middle: Galliano (left), Mc Queen and Westwood

Givenchy's elegant salon wearing ripped jeans and boomer boots and holding a beer.

He dismisses John Galliano, who moved from Givenchy to Dior, as a man of the 1980s and calls Vivienne Westwood "ridiculous" for the strong historical element in her clothes, saying: "No one wants to dress up in period costumes." "In London, I am at the top," says McQueen, "and I don't want to be drowned by Paris." First stage in his tough-guy strategy is not even to bother learning French. He then plans to show his first ready-to-wear collection away from Paris, as

P.H.S.

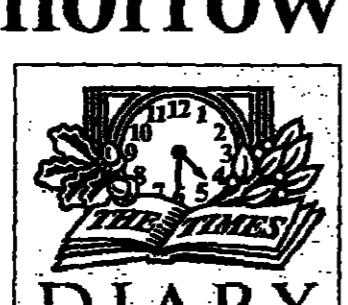
Jam tomorrow

MEMBERS of Parliament who retire this year are doing their best to make sure that the election takes place after the beginning of April. Their concern crosses party political boundaries, for each will be eligible to claim thousands of pounds if the dissolution of Parliament takes place in the new financial year.

Every MP who retires at the general election can claim up to £11,600 if the election is called after the beginning of April, the fees office at Westminster confirmed yesterday. This would be in addition to their retirement pay and pension. Should John Major call an election before April, however, they will not get the money.

The office costs allowance was increased to £46,364, said the fees office. "If the election takes place after the new financial year, they would be entitled to claim up to a quarter of that."

About 80 MPs have announced their intention to retire at the general election, 62 of them Conservatives. Among Ulster Unionists, who hold the balance of power and could force an election by voting repeatedly against the Government,



ment, only Sir James Moyley was planning to retire. But yesterday he was unavailable for comment.

Other MPs who are stepping down at the election either claimed not to know of the generous allowance or were reluctant to talk about financial matters after the brouhaha about the huge pay rise they awarded themselves last year. "It's a sensitive issue," said one. "We don't want to stoke up the row that we saw last year again."

Late excuse

IN A FATUOUS attempt to justify its recurrent excuse for delayed

trains, Railtrack has saturated stations with a leaflet entitled *Just how do trains delay trains?*

Train operators cannot be blamed, it explains, nor indeed can Railtrack: "Fallen leaves really do disrupt train services. And not just here in the UK but all over Europe and in the USA."

The leaves themselves take the blame: chestnut, sycamore, poplar and ash are damned as "the worst offenders". Crushed by passing trains, they "carbonise ... into a hard, Teflon-like coating on the rails", leaving trains performing wheelspins and smoking helplessly on their bogies.

• The bald singer Phil Collins stepped into Albanian national hero Norman Wisdom's shoes yesterday as president of Comic Heritage, which raises money for comedy-related events. Collins has never made me laugh, although he did once appear dressed as a tramp with the great master Ronan Barker in *The Two Ronnies*.

MADRID was full of choking Spaniards on New Year's Eve as the Puerta del Sol clock, Madrid's Big Ben, chimed 12 at double speed. Fast chimes would be no problem

in Britain, but in Spain they like to eat a grape for each chime to bring in the year. Normally the clock's chimes come every 2.7 seconds.

This year, however, because of restoration work, they resounded every 1.4 seconds, leaving Spaniards in the square beneath the clock — and those watching on television — with juice dribbling down their chins and cheeks full of pills. The city's horologist-in-chief, Vincente Rodriguez, has been blamed for not slowing down the chimes. Rodriguez

however, is a sombre horn-blower, jealous of his reputation. Like a real man, he has passed the buck on to his superiors.

Great Scott</



A TALE OF TWO ELECTIONS

Ministers should concentrate on winning the first

Short of installing 40 new telephone lines outside the Department of Health, Stephen Dorrell could not have made more blatantly clear his pessimistic diagnosis of the Prime Minister's condition, nor the feverish nature of his own mind. Mr Dorrell's decision to share with the world his wish for Britain to renegotiate its membership of the EU is a display of ambition too naked for this chill January. Presented as a helpful thought on how the Tories might position themselves for the general election, it is a crude attempt by Mr Dorrell to position himself for a Tory leadership election. It would be unrealistic to imagine that politicians could ever stop calculating how events might advance their own careers. But in their own interests, their party's, and the country's, many of the current Cabinet contenders should show greater maturity.

Although Labour enjoys an historically high and apparently unbridgeable opinion poll lead, the Conservatives could still win the general election. The party's activists certainly think so. Every intervention like Mr Dorrell's, however, makes defeat more likely by revealing that ministers do not have as much faith in their party's electability as its lowlier members. Such interventions so close to the general election do not render their makers any more attractive as potential successors to John Major.

Follow ministers' lead to office, colleagues anxious to hold marginal seats and voters who fear a Labour government will not thank ministers who are attracting attention to their leadership campaigns rather than the party's general election effort. More likely to command, and deserve, respect are those ministers, such as Malcolm Rifkind and Michael Portillo or even William Hague and Ian Lang, who are concentrating on doing their current job well rather than soliciting for another.

What makes Mr Dorrell's intervention all the more clumsy is its synthetic feel. Other ministers, most notably Gillian Shephard and Michael Howard have been energetic

courting backbench attention, but their positions have seemed more natural. The stance the Education Secretary struck on corporal punishment and, to an even greater extent, the interventions by the Home Secretary on Europe are consonant with their political personalities and history. Considering his record, Mr Dorrell's embrace of renegotiation is as unexpected a sight as a bishop in a bookmaker's. A persistent wet, to the left even of Chris Patten, he is an unlikely champion of the sceptic cause. Mr Dorrell's conversion may be genuine but the suspicion must remain that when he leans to the right he is really just tacking into the wind.

The Tories would be well advised, if defeated, not to choose a new leader in haste, lest they have the leisure of long years in opposition to repent. There will be pressure for an early change. Mr Major might be tempted to resign. The rules allow him to be challenged within three months of a new Parliament meeting, which could mean July if there is a general election before May. The Conservatives, however, would probably be better waiting until at least November before contemplating change.

Neil Kinnock's insistence on resigning quickly after defeat in 1992 meant that Labour chose the obvious, rather than the best, leader. It was only tragedy which saved Labour from its folly. The Conservatives should learn from Labour's lesson and have a proper post-mortem before contemplating change. The party conference could be part of that process. A leader chosen by under 300 shell-shocked MPs, a third of whom are new, and two thirds of whom are in safe seats, is unlikely to be as capable of winning back Tory support as a candidate who can prove on the public platform that he can reach out to activists from lost marginals. If the Tories are to have any chance of winning this spring, or in the future, they must ensure that their traditional tunes of free enterprise and a free nation are sung by those who know the words by heart.

SMALL CRASH, NOT MANY HURT

Ten years ago: Black Monday was a blip en route to boom

On October 19, 1987, the Dow Jones industrial average, the benchmark index of American and global share prices, fell by 508 points, or 25 per cent, in one day. Even before lunchtime, as the London stock market and the bourses of Europe closed down with record losses, the whole world had learnt to describe it as Black Monday, an echo of the 1929 Wall Street Crash. It seemed to symbolise the end of an era.

The astonishing nature of that day's events on Wall Street was illustrated by the reactions of two of the star participants in today's financial markets. Alan Greenspan, then recently appointed as Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, had left Washington that morning to deliver a speech in Dallas. When he took off the Dow was down "only" 300 points. On arriving in Dallas his first question was how the market had closed. "Five-o-eight down" came the answer. Mr Greenspan responded with relief: "So it ended just 508 down? I knew it would bounce back after lunch."

Meanwhile back in New York, George Soros, who had just earned his first cover story in *Fortune* as the "world's greatest investor", was suffering the worst day so far in his turbulent financial life. Mr Soros had bet his entire fortune, as was his wont, on a seemingly foolproof wager: Wall Street might eventually fall, but when it did, the vastly more overvalued market in Tokyo would fall much further. But, defying all logic, Tokyo fell only slightly and he was forced to capitulate, taking a loss of \$700 million as he liquidated thousands of futures contracts into the tumbling market. "Technically this is 1929," he despairingly told the *Financial Times*.

PLOTTED AND PIECED

Common law and common sense support the hedgerow

Britain's countryside is defined by its hedgerows: ancient, vibrant corridors of wildlife between its fields and pastures that leave the landscape "plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough" in the words of Gerard Manley Hopkins. Postwar farming, however, has wreaked more destruction on this timeless aspect of England's glory than bombs ever caused to its cities. Miles upon miles of hedgerow has been uprooted to create prairies for combine harvesters. Huge swaths of countryside have been swept bare of all defining features in the scramble to grow ever more, ever more intensively.

Yesterday's victory in Hull County Court by a campaigner demanding the enforcement of a 1765 Enclosures Act that forbids the destruction of any hedgerow is therefore a landmark judgment in every sense. It may, finally, give legislative teeth to faltering government attempts to combat the pernicious effects of the common agricultural policy. It will certainly influence the Government's promised hedgerow legislation.

The issue on which Colin Seymour brought his challenge may be trivial, and arguably against the interests of his village, which wanted to build a bowing green in place of an ugly, unkempt hedge. But the precedent is immensely important, and conservationists across the country have recog-

nised the wider implications. There are around 4,500 different Acts in England and Wales that control the 40,000 miles of hedge-row, so a blanket interpretation of the one in question may be difficult. Protesters can now challenge the uprooting of ancient hedges – lost at the rate of 5,000 miles a year between 1946 and 1974. And the ruling may even oblige farmers and developers to replant some of those already destroyed.

Hedgerows are not only aesthetic boundaries framing the intimacy of Britain's fields; they are cover, breeding grounds and sources of food for bank voles and wood mice, linnets, redwings and chaffinches, and hunting corridors for weasels and stoats. Sheep and cattle find windbreaks, and even motorists are protected from ice and snowdrifts by their shelter.

Mr Seymour has made litigation a lifetime obsession. That does not diminish the importance of his reaffirmation of the ability of a determined individual, through the dogged pursuit of ancient rights, to insist on common law being applied with common sense. "See, banks and brakes now leave how thick! Laced they are again with fretty chevrol" Hopkins wrote. Thanks to Mr Seymour, East Anglia's unbroken flat vistas may again be dotted with white thorn flowers and scarlet berries.

Risks of justice on the cheap

From Professor William L. Reynolds and Professor William M. Richman

Sir, As American law professors, we are distressed to learn that the judges of the British Court of Appeal are planning to hire young lawyers as American-style law clerks, to assist them with an ever-growing caseload (reports, November 15, 29). That is a most unfortunate expedient, judging from the long and unhappy experience of American appellate courts, and we trust that Britain will learn from our experience.

The use of judicial assistants, both here and in Britain, is prompted by a desire to save judicial resources, a goal which can be realised only if the judges delegate significant decision-making authority to them. All judges love delegation: it permits them to avoid personal involvement in the less interesting cases involving apparently routine problems of poor persons.

British judges will soon realise, of course, that if they hire more assistants, they can avoid an even larger number of unpleasant and dreary cases. It is but a short step from that realisation to the hiring of assistants who are not responsible to individual judges but to the court as a whole, who do not work under individual judicial supervision and who handle the least supervising cases of all.

The result, in America at least, is that an ever-increasing number of law clerks bear an ever-increasing responsibility for decision-making. While the real judges reserve their energies for the "important" cases, the clerks effectively decide the "less important" cases involving the poor and powerless. The process seems irreversible once judges realise that more clerks make it easier for the judges to distance themselves from the commonplace problems of the mass of society.

Politicians embrace the trend towards more judicial assistants because it saves money: they are cheaper than judges. The only losers are the poor – and some vague abstraction called justice.

Yours sincerely,
WILLIAM L. REYNOLDS,
WILLIAM M. RICHMAN
(Toledo Law School),
University of Maryland,
School of Law,
500 West Baltimore Street,
Baltimore, MD 21201-1786.
December 30.

Customer service

From Mr A. D. MacPherson

Sir, The Today programme on Radio 4 this morning spent considerable time on the improvements in customer service as a result of privatisations in the last 17 years, but I wonder if the following example from the US can be improved upon?

Yesterday evening, I was talking on the telephone to a close friend in Newport, Rhode Island. She told me that they had come home after a New Year's Eve party at 1.30am to find that their central heating had broken down (the ambient temperature was 12 degrees below freezing). They rang their on-contractor's repair service and by 3am the installation had been repaired and was in full working order again.

Yours sincerely,
A. D. MACPHERSON,
Stillwaters, East Street,
Milborne Port, Sherborne, Dorset
January 2.

Investigations of MPs

From Sir Gordon Downey,
Parliamentary Commissioner for
Standards

Sir, The article by Andrew Pierce ("Tories face poll setback on cash for questions", December 30) is misleading in a number of respects. The facts are as follows:

– the allegations against Members of Parliament by Mr Al Fayed and *The Guardian* gave rise to two inquiries, not one. The first is well advanced: most of the evidence has been heard; and I hope to report my conclusions to the Select Committee on Standards and Privileges early in the New Year; – the second concerns Mr Hamilton and others. So far as possible, this is being conducted concurrently with the first. But the allegations against Mr Hamilton have only recently been confirmed by *The Guardian* and Mr Al Fayed; and, despite repeated promises, much of the supporting evidence is still awaited;

– as yet, *The Guardian's* allegations against others have not been formally specified nor has the supporting evidence been supplied;

– independent Counsel is assisting me in my inquiries. The Treasury Solicitor is not involved;

– resources are not a constraint; nor have I complained of inadequate photocopying facilities;

– in the absence of relevant evidence, there is no target date for this report but I would hope that the inquiry would be concluded well ahead of a dissolution of Parliament. Publication is a matter for the Select Committee.

Yours faithfully,
GORDON DOWNEY,
House of Commons.
December 30.

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9KN Telephone 0171-782 5000

MPs' accord over ex-service unit

From Mr Alfred Morris, MP for
Manchester Wythenshawe (Labour
and Co-operative)

Sir, The letter from the Secretary General of the Royal British Legion (December 24) is a timely reminder of the Government's failure to arrest the growth of parliamentary support for my early day motion (19) calling for an ex-service affairs unit in Whitehall to address the problems and needs of ex-service people and their dependants.

Indeed, the more strongly ministers criticise the motion, the more support it attracts from MPs of all parties. This is not an issue that divides one side of Parliament from the other. Instead it is fast becoming one that divides Government from Parliament as a whole.

The letter of the same date from Lord Mackay of Ardbrecknish does

not help the Government's case. If there were any substance to his fears of "expensive duplication" and "an extra layer of bureaucracy", the same would apply just as strongly to the Government's creation of a unit to coordinate its policies on disability issues.

Lord Mackay's letter reminds me of a Conservative MP's wise advice to his former colleagues at the Ministry of Defence, when we were campaigning for a better deal for war widows in 1989. He asked them to recognise that the Government's only real choice was whether or not to retreat gracefully. We must hope that this time they make the right choice.

Yours faithfully,
ALFRED MORRIS,
House of Commons.
December 30.

Lessons of the past on Hong Kong

From Sir Percy Cradock

Sir, In your leading article, "Midnight chimes" (December 24), you rightly present the termination of the existing Legislative Council and the setting up of the provisional legislature as a serious setback to democracy in Hong Kong. But you omit to mention the cause, namely the British attempt to impose undiluted electoral changes.

We had repeated Chinese warnings, going back over years, of what would happen if we took that course. They were disregarded. In consequence, instead of a through-train for an elected legislature, as was agreed with China before 1992, we have a Chinese-appointed body. The provisional legislature is no isolated Chinese act, but the Patten policy came home to roost.

We cannot hope to develop sensible policies towards China and Hong Kong in the future if we refuse to face the facts of the past.

Yours faithfully,
PERCY CRADOCK,
Reform Club, Pall Mall, SW1.
December 27.

From Sir Alfred Sherman

Sir, Sir Horace Phillips's letter (December 31) is wrong about Hong Kong island's dependence on the mainland for water and food.

The then Director of the Hong Kong Water Department – who told me *inter alia* that he had not been consulted prior to the decision to hand over Hong Kong to Communist rule – assured me in 1992 that Hong Kong was quite capable of dispensing with mainland water supplies if necessary. Much had already been done, by shifting water-intensive industries onto the mainland, creating reservoirs between outer islands and using sea-water for many purposes.

The shortfall if the Communists cut off the water supply – which they had never threatened to do; the threat was entirely the creation of simoniac British mandarins – could have been made good by desalination. He estimated that this would cost between £300 million and £400 million, a mite for the UK budget, where Peking would have lost £150 million a year from selling water with no alternative market.

Similarly, HK food suppliers assured me that were the supplies of fresh food from the mainland to dry up – here again there was no threat from Peking – they could import from the whole world without any problem, leaving the Chinese suppliers without a market.

Sincerely,
ALFRED SHERMAN,
14 Malvern Court,
Onslow Square, SW7.

Sexism in the Church

From the Reverend
Malcolm A. Johnson

Sir, Would someone please point me in the direction of Prince Charles's "pathetic politically correct progressives" in the Church of England (leading article, "Charles and his Church", December 30)? After 34 years as a priest I see no sign of them.

Our bishops, carefully vetted by 10 Downing Street, are chosen by a secret cabal called the Crown Appointments Commission; there are no women bishops or deans and very few women archdeacons, residential canons or incumbents. Some congregations will not have their ministrations at any price and have their own bishops.

Homosexual clergy, approximately 15 per cent of the workforce, are told to lead celibate, hidden lives and ethnic minorities still experience the cold shoulder in many congregations. The General Synod continues to be obsessed with ecclesiastical legislation and internal problems.

A few politically correct progressives might bring us some much-needed new life in 1997.

Yours faithfully,
MALCOLM JOHNSON
(Master),
The Royal Foundation of
Saint Katherine,
2 Butcher Row, E14.
December 30.

Sounds of silence

From Mr Eric R. Stevens

Sir, Your leading article, "Imperfect peace" (December 24), considering the relationship of noise and peace, was I feel, unnecessarily one-sided.

Why should the noise of bleepers be any less acceptable than the noise of church bells? Surely there was a case for balancing the issue by identifying some, at least, of the benefits of modern technology in overcoming noise.

My nights are now totally undisturbed owing to the marvels of silent digital clocks and watches which have

Currency control

From Miss Adrienne May

Sir, Of course, as Mr John Egan suggests in his letter (December 28), citing mine of December 21, exchange rates taken out of their economic context can be misleading, but a weak economy begets a weak currency. That is why devaluation has been about. The pound has done, in many cases, much worse than other world currencies; therefore, other than for reasons of sentiment why should it be so important to retain it?

Mr Egan asks whom I would like to control the economy: certainly not any political party in power, here or elsewhere. It is too open to gerrymandering. Not the Bank of England, subversive to government, immersed in the City "old boy network", that failed in the BCCI and Barings affairs. If a Eurobank could run our economy as well as the Bundesbank has for Germany, then why not? It all depends on the solidity of the convergence criteria.

We must stop fooling ourselves that we in the UK are chosen by God to lead the world, superior morally, intellectually, democratically, judicially and dynamically. This attitude, bordering on xenophobia, is what I find so distasteful in the Europhobic wing.

Yours faithfully,
ADRIENNE MAY,
2 Burton Close,
Nr Walsham, Norfolk.
December 28.

replaced those quaint but noisy clock-work devices. Thick lagging and double glazing, installed primarily for heat conservation, keep our external noises. My house is silent, and certainly quieter than Cader Idris.

Your assessment of the Buddhist on the mountain confuses solitude and silence. The two are not synonymous. With 60 miles an hour winds he may be alone but he will not enjoy silence.

Yours etc.
ERIC R. STEVENS,
Scotney, Southover Place,
Spring Lane, Burwash, East Sussex.
December 24.

Ribbons or bows?

From Dr Helen Walters

Sir, In a recent trade paper I read with interest an article about bow-ties. The ability to do one small item of clothing that instantly made you "stand out from the crowd" and appear "distinctive, artistic and thoughtful" was very attractive.

My only problem is, as a female GP, what do I wear to achieve the same effect?

Yours sincerely,
HELEN WALTERS,
Kyarebay,
34 New Road, Whitehill, Hampshire.

SOCIAL NEWS

The Princess Royal, President, Royal Yachting Association, will visit the London International Boat Show, Earls Court, London SW5, on January 8.

Premium Bonds

The £1 million prize in the Premium Bond draw for January 1997 was won with bond number 26PB 176238. The winner lives in South Yorkshire and has a bond holding of £6,000.

Birthdays today

Brigadier Sir John Anstey, former president, National Seafarers' Committee, 90; Mr David Aberton, conductor, 53; Earl Baldwin of Bewdley, 59; Mr John Bamforth, former Principal, Lincoln College, Oxford, 76; Mr Michael Barraud, broadcaster, 69; Mr Victor Borge, pianist and comedian, 88; Mr Keith Brookman, trade unionist, 60; Sir Robin Butler, Cabinet Secretary, 59; Sir Bryan Carsberg, former Director-General, Office of Fair Trading, 58; Mr Fran Cotton, former rugby player, 49; Sir Alastair Forbes, former president, Court of Appeal, Gibraltar, 89; Mr Mel Gibson, actor, 41; Sir Richard Hambury-Tenison, Lord-Lieutenant of Gwent, 72; Sir Roy Harding, education consultant, 73; Mr Gavin Hastings, rugby player, 39; Mr Robert Hughes, MP, 65; Admiral Sir Michael Layard, 61; Miss Arlyn, model, former ballerina, 34; Sir George Martin, composer and record producer, 71; Mr Eric Marlow, MP, 78; Mr Sir Card Mather, former MP, 78; Mr Siemund Nicoll, former member, Anagnos Quartet, 75; Sir John Riddell, extra equerry to the Prince of Wales, 63; Miss Eirlys Roberts, former deputy director, Consumers' Association, 86; Mr Graham Ross, Russell, former chairman, EMAP, 64; Mr Nicholas Scheele, chairman and chief executive, Jaguar, 52; Mr Michael Schumacher, racing driver, 28; Mr R.R. Steedman, architect, 68; Mr Matthew Taylor, MP, 34; Mr John Thaw, actor, 55; Mr David Vine, sports commentator, 62.

Scottish judiciary

Lord Cullen to be Lord Justice Clerk in succession to Lord Rose, who will retire on January 7. Lord Cullen is a Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland. He chaired the Court of Inquiry into the Piper Alpha disaster and undertook the public inquiry into the Dunblane tragedy.

Appointment

Sir Timothy Garden succeeds Professor Sir Laurence Marin as Director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House).

BMDS: 0171 680 6880
PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

Magnificent Edwardian courts are back in session again

Northern splendour survives £1.2m refit

By MARCUS BINNEY
ARCHITECTURE CORRESPONDENT

WORKMEN are putting the finishing touches to an immaculate £1.2 million restoration of one of the finest groups of law courts in the North of England. The magnificent Edwardian Sessions House in Preston looks doomed when new combined courts opened a decade ago in the town but rising demand for court space has led the Lord Chancellor's Department to refurbish the old building for continued use.

Brian Tower, the project architect at the Hurd Rolland Partnership, said: "We have had to make quite a few changes but our brief was that at the end of the job no-one should be aware of them."

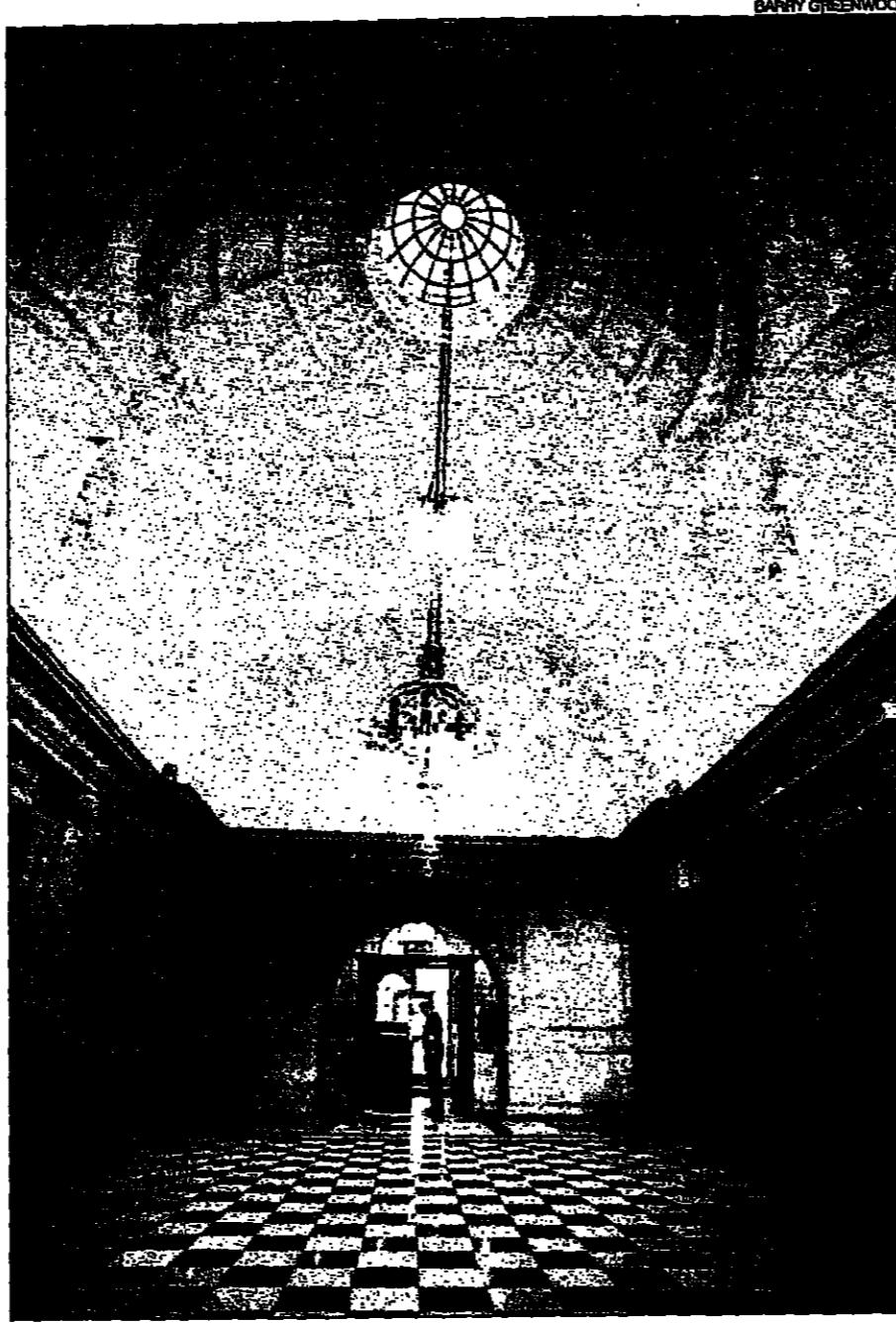
The latest Home Office regulations demand facilities that many old court buildings do not provide, including separate access for witnesses and jury members.

"We have reversed all the furniture in the courtrooms so that witnesses come in from the same side as the judges and share their privacy," Mr Tower said.

A court spokesman explained: "The High Court judges will sit here on more serious cases. The old courtrooms have the advantage of much larger public galleries, taking 40 people rather than 20. Seats are separated by a central aisle so that in a tense murder trial, the victim's family can be seated on one side and the defendant's on the other with a security guard in between."

At the same time the central dock in each court, which seated only four, has been enlarged to take eight or more. "Defendants in the old days must have been much slimmer," was one comment.

President's handsome Sessions House was designed to complement the magnificent Greek Revival Harris Library and Art Gallery next door which was completed 12



The superbly refurbished hall of the Edwardian Sessions House at Preston

years earlier. The court's 170ft-high tower is a match for the spires of Wren's City of London church and the bold Baroque facades with elaborate wrought iron balconies have the sophistication of French 18th-century public buildings. The courts were designed by the Lancashire county architect, Henry Littler the Younger, who also designed the girls' grammar school at Lancaster. The sculpture including statues of Hercules and Britannia and much of the interior decoration and detailing was done

Among other new features

BARRY GREENWOOD

Mr A.J. Perham and Miss A.L. Napier The engagement is announced between Andrew, eldest son of Dr and Mrs Geoffrey Perham, of Plymouth, Devon, and Araminta, younger daughter of the late the Hon Greville Napier and of the Hon Mrs Greville Napier, of Treford, West Sussex.

Mr T.E. Burchett and Miss A.L. Denekop The engagement is announced between Allan, elder son of Mr John MacDonald, MBE, GMH, and Mrs MacDonald, of Glenrothes, Fife, and Imogen, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs David Bailey, of Walton on Thames, Surrey.

Mr W.S.G.A. Carter and Miss O.P. Jilka The engagement is announced between Michael, only son of Mr and Mrs Jonathan Edwards, and Lucy, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Richard Graville.

Mr R.R. Grisenthwaite The engagement is announced between Richard Roy, only son of Mr and Mrs D.A. Grisenthwaite, of Kirkcaldy, Fife, and Marjorie Wilmsie Maria, only daughter of Mr and Mrs J.C. Velman, of Wiveton, Norfolk.

Mr E.D.V. Bryan and Miss D.K. Edwards The engagement is announced between Edward, son of Mr N.V. Bryan of Shipgate, and Mrs A.G. Phillips, of Stamford, and Deborah, daughter of Captain J.T. Black and Mrs G. Black, of Titchfield, Hampshire.

Mr G.J. Holden and Miss C.D. Thompson The engagement is announced between Greg, son of Mr and Mrs David Holden, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Caroline, daughter of Mr and Mrs Nigel Thompson, of Amersham, Buckinghamshire.

Mr G.P.C. Mackay and Miss C. Roseley The engagement is announced between Giles, younger son of Mr and Mrs Oliver Mackay, of Diss, Norfolk, and Caroline, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Roseley, of Stowmarket, Suffolk.

Mr J.A. Commissaris and Miss J.M. Warhurst The engagement is announced between Jeroen, elder son of Mr and Mrs Augustinus Commissaris, of Johannesburg, South Africa, and Juliet, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Raymond Warhurst, of Shefield, South Yorkshire.

Mr M. Brown and Miss G.M. McDermott The engagement is announced between Matthew, son of Mr and Mrs David Brown, of Wreath, Essex, and Geraldine, younger daughter of the late Mr Francis McDermott and Mrs Elizabeth Bell, of Liverpool, Merseyside.

Mr J.A. Commissaris and Miss J.M. Warhurst The engagement is announced between Jeroen, elder son of Mr and Mrs Augustinus Commissaris, of Johannesburg, South Africa, and Juliet, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Raymond Warhurst, of Shefield, South Yorkshire.

Mr G.C. de Castro Canellas and Miss E.S. Milford The engagement is announced between Gonçalo, youngest son of Senhor José Jorge Canellas and Senhora Maria Fernanda Coimbra de Castro Canellas, of Golegá, Portugal, and Sarah, eldest daughter of Dr and Mrs Tim Milford, of Liverpool, Merseyside.

Mr M.G. Pip and Miss K.L. Bell The engagement is announced between Marcus, son of Lieutenant-Colonel and Mrs David Pipe, of Windlesham, Surrey, and Kate, daughter of Mr and Mrs Timothy Bell, of Langedwyn, Powys.

Mr M.R. Preston and Miss J. Davis The engagement is announced between Captain Rupert Charles Steeple, The Devonshire and Dorset Regiment, son of Lieutenant-Colonel and Mrs Robert Steeple, of Thorerton, North Yorkshire, and Julie, second daughter of Mr and Mrs Robert Whittaker, of Chobham, Surrey.

Mr A.V. Schenkel and Miss K.W. Robertson The engagement is announced between Adriano, only son of Mr and Mrs Sandro Schenkel, of Finchley, London, and Wendy, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs John Robertson, of Whitecraig, Glasgow.

Captain R.C. Steeple and Miss J. Davis The engagement is announced between Captain Rupert Charles Steeple, The Devonshire and Dorset Regiment, son of Lieutenant-Colonel and Mrs Robert Steeple, of Thorerton, North Yorkshire, and Julie, second daughter of Mr and Mrs Robert Whittaker, of Chobham, Surrey.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr A.K. McDonald and Miss I.M. Bailey

The engagement is announced between Allan, elder son of Mr John McDonald, MBE, GMH, and Mrs MacDonald, of Glenrothes, Fife, and Imogen, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs David Bailey, of Walton on Thames, Surrey.

Mr C.J.T. Morris and Ms D.P. Jilka

The engagement is announced between William, youngest son of Sir Peter, 1st Baronet, of Wimborne and Wimborne, Wiltshire, and Olga, younger daughter of Colonel Pavel Ilin, of Nikolsk, Ukraine, and Dr Nadejda Ilin, of Moscow, Russia.

Signor R. Rampini and Miss J. Armstrong

The engagement is announced between Romano, son of Signori Rampini, of Gaiole in Chianti, Siena, Italy, and Jessica, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Armstrong, of Lydeard St Lawrence, Somerset.

Mr M.J. Robson and Miss K.E. Longman

The engagement is announced between Mark, son of Mr and Mrs Clifford Robson, of Northgate, Humbershire, and Karen, daughter of Mr and Mrs Iain Longman, of Ulkley, West Yorkshire.

Mr G.R.H. Scott and Miss S.L. Davies

The engagement is announced between George, son of Mr and Mrs Peter Scott, of Egglestone, Cleveland, and Sophie, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs David Daniels, of Ringwood, Hampshire.

Mr A.V. Schenkel and Miss K.W. Robertson

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The site of Sidney Street took place when anarchists led by "Peter the Painter" were besieged by police in the East End of London, 1911.

Howard Carter discovered the sarcophagus in the tomb of Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings, near Luxor, 1922.

Sir Edmund Hillary reached the South Pole, 1958.

International Monetary Fund lent £230 million to Britain, 1977.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Marcus Tullius Cicero, Roman orator and statesman, Burleson, Staffordshire, 106BC; Sir James Stephen, colonial administrator and historian, Lambeth, 1789; Robert Whitehead, inventor, Bolton-le-Moors, Lancashire, 1823; Clement Attlee, 1st Earl Attlee, Prime Minister 1945-51, London, 1952; James Brudenell, Baroness of Chandos, 1730-1801; James Bisset, 1st Baron Bisset, 1801-75; James Bisset, 2nd Baron Bisset, 1832-1907; James Bisset, 3rd Baron Bisset, 1856-1927; James Bisset, 4th Baron Bisset, 1882-1953; James Bisset, 5th Baron Bisset, 1912-79.

DEATHS: Josiah Wedgwood, potter, Burslem, Staffordshire, 1795; Aphra Behn, actress, Cambray, 1640; Pierre Larousse, lexicographer, 1846; William Harrison Ainsworth, historical novelist, Reigate, Surrey, 1882; James Elroy Flecker, poet, Davos, Switzerland, 1915; Jaroslav Hašek, novelist, Lipno, Czechoslovakia, 1923; William Joyce (Lord Haw-Haw), traitor, executed, London, 1946; Edwin Muir, writer, Cambridge, 1959; Conrad Hilton, hotel magnate, California, 1979; Martin Luther, founder of Protestantism, was excommunicated in 1521.

The site of Sidney Street took place when anarchists led by "Peter the Painter" were besieged by police in the East End of London, 1911.

Howard Carter discovered the sarcophagus in the tomb of Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings, near Luxor, 1922.

Sir Edmund Hillary reached the South Pole, 1958.

International Monetary Fund lent £230 million to Britain, 1977.

TRADE: 0171 481 1982
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PERSONAL COLUMN

BIRTHS

DEATHS

ANNIVERSARIES

NOTES

THE TIMES TODAY

FRIDAY JANUARY 3 1997

NEWS

Drink-drive cases up by 18 per cent

The number of motorists caught drinking and driving over the Christmas holiday rose by 18 per cent compared with last year. The total — 5,209 in England and Wales — was the second highest this decade. There were also more accidents in which one of the parties had been drinking — up 4 per cent from 939 to 974. The figures prompted police and road safety campaigners to call for a lower alcohol limit for drivers. Page 1

Dorrell lines up with Euro-sceptics

Stephen Dorrell revived speculation about the Conservative leadership and increased Cabinet pressure on Kenneth Clarke by calling for a renegotiation of Britain's relationship with the European Union. The pro-European Health Secretary aligned himself with Cabinet Euro-sceptics as he proposed an overhaul of European institutions. Pages 1, 2

Parents' plea

The parents of a 17-year-old girl who was found battered to death on New Year's Day paid tribute to their daughter in a handwritten note seeking public help in the hunt for the killer. Page 1

Dieting secret

Diets based on counting calories are less effective at keeping weight down than changing the type of foods eaten. People who swap chips for pasta but allow themselves unlimited amounts, do better than those who try to restrict quantity. Page 1

BBC in West talks

The BBC has been in negotiations with Portman Entertainment Group to produce a documentary-drama about mass murderer Fred West. Page 2

Hedge campaigner

Britain's most successful amateur litigant scored a landmark court victory that could lead to the replanting of thousands of miles ancient hedgerows. Page 3

Freeze continues

Most of Britain faces a freezing weekend as the battle between two weather systems draws swaths of bitter cold air from Siberia. Page 4

Hangover aid

Drinkers have sworn by it for centuries but now scientists have proved it is true: a morning-after Serb in order to stay in power. Page 4

Grass that always stays green

A grass which stays "evergreen" has been developed by British scientists who believe it will be the answer to a groundsmen's prayer. It keeps its fresh colour even in a drought. The grass has been bred by researchers at the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research, Aberystwyth, who claim it stays green even after it withers. Page 1



Troops with 1,000 lb of homemade explosive left in a van parked in the grounds of Belfast Castle on New Year's Eve. Page 2

BUSINESS

Jobs: McDonalds Restaurants are to open more than 100 new outlets in Britain during 1997, creating at least 5,000 new full and part-time jobs. Page 23

Britannia blast

Britain's leading yacht designers condemned the Government's failure to make a decision on the future of the royal yacht, *Britannia*. Page 9

Tapie accused

France's former football champions, misspent more than £11.3 million on rigging matches and transfers under the presidency of Bernard Tapie, *Le Monde* said. Page 23

Talks in trouble

The Israeli-Palestinian talks about the future of Hebron ran into trouble despite a new urgency to complete an accord after the rifle attack. Page 13

Church on attack

The Serbian Orthodox Church made an unprecedented attack on President Milosevic, accusing him of trying to set Serb against Serb in order to stay in power. Page 14

WEATHER

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UK Roads - All regions 0336 401 910

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fault lines in
EMU consensus
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EDUCATION

Jobs for science
graduates under
the microscope
PAGE 35

SPORT

Simon Barnes on
the source of
England's trouble
PAGES 36-44

TELEVISION
AND
RADIO
PAGES
42, 43

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

FRIDAY JANUARY 3 1997

Bigger Mac means 5,000 jobs to be filled in 1997

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

MCDONALD'S, the American burger chain, yesterday became the latest service sector company to unveil plans to create new jobs in Britain this year, saying it will hire 5,000 mostly part-time staff.

McDonald's will spend more than \$10 million opening 110 new restaurants this year. Most will be drive-through establishments and around 90 per cent of the new staff will be paid by the hour. Last year the company created nearly 4,500 new jobs in Britain by opening 90 new restaurants.

In the last few weeks Marks & Spencer

and Safeway and B&Q have announced plans to hire thousands of new staff. In the pub and restaurant business, Greene King said last month that it will create 1,000 new jobs, while Whitbread, joint owners with PepsiCo of the Pizza Hut chain, said that it was creating 5,000 new jobs by opening 150 new branches of restaurants over the next four years.

Government figures released last month showed unemployment falling below two million in November for the first time since 1991. But while the fall in the number of jobless and the increase in service-sector job creation have been hailed by Government

supporters as evidence of the return of the "feel-good" factor, critics have pointed out that, as at McDonald's, many of the new posts on offer give little security and relatively low pay.

McDonald's pointed out yesterday that nearly 60 per cent of its restaurant managers started as hourly-paid staff. "These are real jobs with long-term prospects," it said.

Around three-quarters of the new McDonald's will be housed in prefabricated buildings at out-of-town retail parks or multiplex cinemas. The prefabs are a relatively cheap and speedy option: it can

take as little as nine days from the levelling of a site to the opening of a new restaurant.

The company hopes to open 35 restaurants in London and the South, 28 in the Midlands and Wales, 27 in the North, 12 in Scotland and five in Northern Ireland.

Last year new branches of McDonald's were opened in retail parks, converted pubs, at Segal World in London's Piccadilly Circus, on Stena ferries and even inside a Royal Navy base at Devonport.

There have been signs of McDonald's losing out in the popularity stakes in its highly competitive home market, and in October it reported a decline in domestic

sales for the fifth quarter in a row. However, research shows that the company's market share in the UK continues to grow.

Taylor Nelson, the pollsters, show that in the last three months of 1996, McDonald's claimed 78 per cent of the burger market — up from 75 per cent a year earlier — with Burger King at 14 per cent.

Since it was founded in the early 1950s the company has opened restaurants in 96 countries and now has more than 20,000 restaurants in the US. Although it has slowed the rate of expansion in its domestic market, it still plans to open about 2,500 there during the coming year.

Dow fears send UK shares tumbling

BY JANET BUSH, ECONOMIC EDITOR

EUROPEAN stock markets took a new year's hammering yesterday as Wall Street wobbled badly again on fears of higher US interest rates.

Wall Street, which had plunged by more than 100 points on Tuesday, the last trading day of 1996, yesterday stumped another 96 points before recovering some composure. The Dow Jones industrial average stood 60 points lower when the London market closed and subsequently tumbled the rest to 40 points.

That recovery was too late for London, where the FTSE 100 index closed 61.1 points lower to close at 4,057.4. Shares in France dropped by more than 2.5 per cent and German shares were down more than 2 per cent.

The trigger for yesterday's sell-off was a healthy economic report from America's National Association of Purchasing Management, which raised fears that the US Federal Reserve may be forced into raising interest rates to counter the threat of inflation. The NAPM index rose to 54.0 in December, well above Wall Street forecasts of 52.3.

The purchasing managers' index is watched extremely closely in America because it has, in the past, seemed to trigger rate moves by the Federal Reserve. The Fed started its last cycle of tightening monetary policy in early 1994, when the NAPM hit 55.3. It raised rates five more times in 1994 and 1995 when the index stood between 55.8 and 59.5.

The report also sent US Treasury bonds tumbling, depressing the benchmark 30-year bond by more than a full percentage point. The dollar fell against the yen, quoted in late European trading at Y115.37 compared with Y116.08 late on Tuesday. But it edged up against a weak mark to DM1.5411 from DM1.5400 previously.

The fallout in London



Jurek Piascak plans a bigger chain this year after ending his takeover pursuit

Goldsmiths sparkles at Christmas

JUREK PIASECKI, chairman and chief executive of the Goldsmiths jewellery chain, unveiled strong Christmas trading figures yesterday and said he has given up pursuing Sir Ernest Jones. Sarah Cunningham writes.

He expects to open up to 18 stores this year and hopes to double market share to 6 per cent over the next five years.

In the four weeks to December 28, like-for-like sales were up 9.3 per cent. In the 11 months to the same date they were up 9.4 per cent. Mr Piascak said December trading started well, then flattened out and had been strong in the three days before Christmas. Sales of diamonds and Gucci watches were particularly good.

OECD warns Japan, page 24
Stock markets, page 26
Economic View, page 27

Waterstone venture aims for full listing

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

TIM WATERSTONE, the founder of the Waterstone's bookstore chain, hopes to float his new venture, Daisy & Tom children's stores, on AIM in 1998 and then move as soon as possible to a listing on the main exchange.

Work will begin next week on the first Daisy & Tom, a 20,000 sq ft store on the King's Road in London. It is due to open in May, with two further stores — in Manchester and Scotland — also planned for this year. He hopes to open 30 Daisy & Tom outlets in the long term.

The stores, named after his two-year-old daughter and the

son of fellow investor Christopher Thomson of DC Thomson, will sell children's clothes, shoes, books and toys. "They will be very upmarket and opulent and will look absolutely wonderful," Mr Waterstone said.

Mr Waterstone is chairman and chief executive of the company, and 37 per cent owned by DC Thomson and 26 per cent owned by Quester, the venture capitalists. The flotation on AIM will follow one year's trading with three outlets, Mr Waterstone said.

Child's play, page 27

Hampel Committee extends deadline

BY JASON NISSE

THE Hampel Committee, set up more than a year ago to review the corporate governance guidelines introduced in the Cadbury and Greenbury reports, has extended its timetable for submissions because some of Britain's most influential organisations have missed the December 31 deadline.

Among the bodies given extra time to put the finishing touches to their comments are the Confederation of British Industry and PricewaterhouseCoopers, the lobby group set up to monitor corporate governance procedures.

The committee, chaired by Sir Ronald Hampel, chairman of ICI, has already received more than 50 replies and is expecting up to 20 more. "We've decided

that December 31 was not an absolute deadline as quite a few people have not put in submissions yet, including some leading bodies," said a committee official.

PricewaterhouseCoopers is expecting to put forward its report by the end of the year. It does not publish the submissions it has received, but many of the bodies that have given replies have chosen to make them public.

Among the most controversial have

been the view expressed by the Institute of Chartered Accountants that shareholders are not qualified to make a judgment on what is a reasonable pay package, and should not be allowed to vote on the issue. The ICA added that it felt that the rows about bonuses for senior executives "do not, on the face of it, seem to have been fully justified."

Both leading bodies representing institutional investors — the Association of British Insurers and the National Association of Pension Funds — have come out against there being new rules introduced to add to the burden on British companies. "We are arguing against further regulation," said Richard Regan, who chairs the investment committee of the ABI. "Industry needs time to digest the contents of Greenbury and Cadbury."



Sir Ronald: awaiting replies

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OECD warns recovering Japan to tackle deficit

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

JAPAN'S long-awaited economic recovery after the prolonged recession of the early 1990s now seems under way but the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development said yesterday that Japan must tackle the huge budget deficit built up because of efforts to stimulate the economy.

The OECD, which was publishing its latest survey of the Japanese economy, said that growth is expected to have totalled 3.5 per cent in 1996, which compares well with growth of less than 1 per cent in 1995. However, growth is expected to fall back to only 1.6 per cent this

year with consumption weakening as temporary tax cuts have ended. In order to maintain the recovery's momentum, the OECD recommends that Japan keep interest rates low. Official interest rates have stood at only 0.5 per cent since September 1995, with market interest rates held slightly below that.

The importance of maintaining loose monetary conditions is even more significant given the OECD's recommendation that Japan now starts to tighten fiscal policy, which has been aggressively stimulative throughout the 1990s when growth failed to materialise.

These efforts to kickstart the economy have led to a widening in Japan's general govern-

ment deficit to nearly 4 per cent of gross domestic product. The combined deficits of central and local government has approached 7 per cent of GDP, one of the largest of any industrialised country, and government debt has jumped to almost 90 per cent of GDP.

The OECD said: "It will therefore be appropriate to strengthen fiscal consolidation over the medium term, as rapidly as the underlying growth of domestic demand permits, in order to prevent government indebtedness from rising continuously." It suggested that spending cuts and possibly tax increases will be needed. If tax rises prove necessary, it recommends a further rise in consumption tax.

It noted that action to cut government borrowing is even more pressing because of the rapid ageing of Japan's population. Despite limits on pension benefits, the OECD forecasts that catering for health and welfare needs will boost government spending to about 45 per cent of GDP by 2000 and to more than 45 per cent by 2025.

The OECD also emphasised the need for a broad and more substantial programme of deregulation if Japan's economy is to grow faster. It noted that "progress so far appears modest, as significant impediments to competition still remain in many areas of the service sector."

Company pensions 14% up on state fund

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

PAYMENTS from company pension schemes in Britain have risen 6 per cent, making them 14 per cent higher on average than state pensions, new evidence on Britain's pension schemes shows today.

The findings of an independent study of Britain's major pension schemes show that they paid out more than £10 billion in benefits in their most recent financial year.

In its second annual study of

Britain's occupational pension schemes, Incomes Data Services, the independent pay analyst, says that the average annual pension paid out by company pension schemes is now £3,698.

Examining the reports and accounts of more than 100 large occupational pension schemes, IDS says that this is 14 per cent higher than the current single person's full basic state pension.

The total spend on pensions-in-payment by 104 schemes studied was £10,368 billion in their most recent financial years, the IDS study shows. This is a 6.1 per cent rise on comparable figures for the previous scheme year.

The number of people receiving occupational pensions increased from 2.5 million in the previous year's study to 2.8 million now, although the coverage of the survey is a little wider this year.

The research shows "enormous variations" in the average value of pension payouts, largely driven by the pay position of the companies concerned. Higher-paying industries such as banking and insurance tended to pay higher pensions than industries such as engineering, for example.

Service length is another key factor, with organisations containing long-service employees, such as universities, paying high pensions.

The establishment date of schemes is also significant, with comparatively new schemes, such as that at Rover Cars, paying lower benefits than long-established schemes, such as that at Vauxhall.

Five schemes recorded "significant" increases in the number of pensions-in-payment this year. These were the Post Office, with a 47 per cent rise; Granada, 18 per cent; the Environment Agency, Active Fund, 17 per cent; Vauxhall, 14 per cent; and ICL, 13 per cent.

At the same time, 19 companies showed a decrease in the number of pensions being paid, including a 25 per cent fall at English China Clays because of a bulk transfer of pensioners out of the scheme; a 7 per cent drop at the Railways Superannuation Fund and a 3 per cent fall in the CMT Mineworkers Fund, formerly British Coal.

The Universities Staff Superannuation Scheme again paid the highest pension — this year an average £11,998 to its members. The lowest average pension being paid among those studied was £590 a year at the Norwich Union, although this is for a dedicated scheme specifically for part-time workers.



Bernard Matthews, who sold his shares at a price close to their recent peak

Matthews sells 1m shares

BERNARD MATTHEWS, chairman of the turkey furnishing group that carries his name, has raised £1.25 million by selling a million of his shares (Paul Durman writes).

The price he received, 125½p, was close to the recent peak of 130½p, the highest the shares have been since the stock market crash of 1987. Mr Matthews retains a stake

of 18.5 per cent, keeping his family's holding just above 40 per cent and valuing it at more than £60 million.

Mr Matthews once said that his contribution to society was to change turkey from being solely a Christmas treat, "putting it within the grasp of everybody as an everyday meat". His company now produces about 20 million

turkeys a year, about two-thirds of which are purchased in processed form rather than as whole birds.

The company is expected to make profits this year of about £22 million. It made a good start to the year, overcoming higher feed prices thanks to the BSE scare, which prompted customers to switch from beef to turkey.

Irish economy is 'set to grow 5%

From EILEEN McCABE in DUBLIN

THE Republic of Ireland's economic boom is set to continue this year with real GNP growth of 5 per cent, according to the country's independent economics institute.

The Quarterly Economic Review from the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) estimates that real GNP growth in 1996 was around 5.5 per cent, after growth in excess of 7 per cent for 1995 and 1994. The ESRI says that a deceleration of growth in domestic demand in 1997 will be offset by rapid expansion in export volumes.

Inflation, which was running at 1.6 per cent in 1996, should stay under control at around two per cent in 1997, says the review. It also forecasts contin-

ued strengthening of public finances, with a current budget surplus and an Exchequer borrowing requirement at the same level as last year.

Such is the performance of the Irish economy over the past four years that the ESRI concedes there have been questions about the figures' accuracy. It concludes that although no estimate of economic progress can be definitive, "the trends in the various major elements of the economy fit together in a generally coherent manner".

Ireland's performance is attributed to, among other matters, direct foreign investment in fast-growing industries and the availability of a qualified labour force.

Dispute bad for Bupa's health

From EILEEN McCABE in DUBLIN

BUPA, the British private healthcare group, yesterday conceded that its operations in the Irish Republic have been harmed by a dispute with the Irish Government about its insurance packages.

The dispute, which began in November after Bupa unveiled its packages for the Irish market, escalated yesterday with the Irish Minister of Health apparently threatening legal action if Bupa does not modify its schemes. Bupa replied that its products comply fully with Irish and European law.

A spokeswoman for the group said that although it is happy to co-operate with the Government, its insurance schemes will not be changed. The controversy concerns

Bupa's cash plans, under which clients can upgrade hospital accommodation or take a cash bonus. The plans, unlike Bupa's basic health package, are age weighted. Michael Noonan, Health Minister, said the plans contravene the Health Insurance Act requirement that schemes be offered to everyone at the same price, regardless of age.

Bupa says the cash plans are an optional extra to the basic plan.

Bupa yesterday said that "several thousand people" had bought its schemes, but admitted that the dispute was harming business. It is also embarrassing a government pledged to liberalising the private healthcare market.

Suspension clouds Butte future

By JASON NISSE

THE inglorious stock market career of Butte Mining — despite its name it gave up mining three years ago — is in danger of coming to an end a few months short of its tenth anniversary after its shares were suspended yesterday.

Butte, whose chairman, David Lloyd-Jacob, admits that it only exists as a vehicle for legal actions, said the suspension came because it could not publish its accounts for either of the last two years as it is in talks about outstanding litigation.

Butte has apparently offered to drop one action, a £100 million writ against Ernst & Young, its former auditors, and

is in talks to settle another against three subsidiaries of Simon Engineering. The actions relate to the group's former interests in mining in Montana, US.

However, the process has been held up because a winding-up petition has been issued against the company. This action is believed to have come from the holders of some of Butte's preference shares.

Butte's ordinary shares were floated at 100p in 1987 but yesterday stood at 4p, valuing the company at £1.96 million. "Phucky Little Butte" sold out of mining in 1993, has been involved in a three-year Serious Fraud Office inquiry, massive legal actions, and a spat with the Financial Reporting Review Panel

(FRRP) that has contributed to this latest problem. Last October, Butte was admonished by the FRRP, which threatened to take it to court for booking a £1 million profit on shares it received in an obscure Canadian mining company so turning a £339,000 loss for the year to June 30, 1995 into a £628,000 profit.

Butte has not been able to reissue its accounts for that year, or indeed publish accounts for the year to June 30, 1996, claiming in a statement that they have been held up by negotiations on "its most significant lawsuits". The Exchange insists that companies publish accounts within six months of their year-end and so suspended Butte shares.

Banks and unions claim strike victory

SCOTTISH banks and Bifu, the banking union, have both claimed victory after yesterday's strike in support of the traditional January 2 holiday. Banks, including the Bank of Scotland, Clydesdale, Royal Bank of Scotland, TSB Scotland and Lloyds Bowmaker, the finance house subsidiary of Lloyds, want workers to adopt the Easter Monday bank holiday from England instead. Peter Burt, chairman of the Committee of Scottish Clearing Bankers, said fewer than 50 out of the total 1,200 Scottish branches did not open.

Bifu said many Scottish town centres had been deserted, demonstrating that the public did not want the service.

Sanity Boyle, Bifu's deputy general secretary, said: "They've refused to negotiate with us, and wouldn't listen either to staff or customer. Perhaps now they will listen."

Fokker bid speculation

FOKKER, the collapsed manufacturer of aircraft, could still be saved by a new partner, according to Dutch press reports. Wickard de Waard, a Dutch entrepreneur, is said to have created a limited liability company called Forward Aircraft to use as a vehicle for a takeover bid. He reportedly wants to continue existing production of Fokker aircraft, which could benefit Shorts, which supplies parts from its base in Belfast. Samsung of Korea, has said that it is no longer interested in taking over Fokker after months of unsuccessful negotiations. Fokker's receivers declined to comment on bid speculation.

Hays in German deal

HAYS, the business services group, has acquired Daufenbach, a German car parts distributor, for DM68 million. Daufenbach is the leading German spare parts supplier to General Motors, BMW, Mitsubishi, Toyota, Volkswagen and Chrysler. Ronni Frost, executive chairman of Hays, said: "Daufenbach is a national business with the ability to deliver next day, pre-8am. It has a leading market position and a strong management." Hays is committed to paying a further DM9 million if a certain level of profit is achieved during 1997.

Arcadian hotel deal

ARCADIAN INTERNATIONAL, the hotels and leisure developments group, has acquired Chilston Park Hotel, near Leeds Castle in Kent, for £4.4 million. The 38-bed hotel is set in 22 acres of parkland and has extensive conference facilities. Construction of a further 15 bedrooms is under way. Operating profits for 1996 are expected to be £479,000. Arcadian has granted Hornswold Park an option to acquire Hunslet House, a 25-room hotel near Bath, for £1.86 million. The hotel was bought by Arcadian in 1993 as part of the acquisition of Clipper Hotels.

Cox buys GJW unit

COX Insurance Holdings, the Lloyd's of London agency, has acquired the specialist yacht and cargo business of Groves, John & Westrip (Underwriting) from Sphere Drake for £900,000. GJW has been part of the insurance industry in Liverpool for more than 100 years. It has been underwriting pleasure craft since 1971 and began writing a cargo account in 1990. Premium income generated by GJW, expected to amount to some £10 million in 1997, will be accepted by Lloyd's marine syndicate 590/259, underwritten by Ian Wotton, one of the seven Cox insurance-managed syndicates.

Spirax-Sarco buys

SPIRAX-SARCO Engineering is spending £1 million on acquiring Bredel Holdings, a manufacturer of pumps based in The Netherlands, and the associated Bredel distribution business of Waukesha Cherry Burrell in America. The vendor is United Dominion Industries, of Canada. The acquired businesses had net assets of £3.6 million and generated profits of £1.7 million before interest and tax in the 11 months to the end of November 1996. The consideration is subject to an additional payment of £1 million depending on profits to the end of December.

Regionbridge for Allen

ALLEN, the building contracting and civil engineering company, has acquired Regionbridge, a contracting company based in the West Midlands, for a maximum consideration of £1.75 million, of which £960,000 was paid in cash on completion. A further payment of £240,000 is due in March 1997 after agreement of the completion accounts and a final instalment of up to £550,000 due in March 1998, depending on profits. In 1995 Regionbridge earned pre-tax profits of £224,000 on turnover of £7.6 million.

Beverley's loss deepens

PRE-TAX LOSSES of Beverley Group, the manufacturer and supplier of industrial pumps and valves, grew to £531,000 from £462,000, in the half year to August 31 on turnover down to £1.15 million, from £1.23 million. The loss per share was 0.27p (0.56p loss). There is again no dividend. Beverley said that the losses reflected the continuing difficult trading conditions as the group emerges from a company voluntary arrangement.

For results for the half year to August 31, see page 10.

For results for the year to June 30, see page 10.

For results for the year to December 31, see page 10.

For results for the year to June 30, 1995, see page 10.

For results for the year to December 31, 1995, see page 10.

For results for the year to June 30, 1994, see page 10.

For results for the year to December 31, 1994, see page 10.

For results for the year to June 30, 1993, see page 10.

For results for the year to December 31, 1993, see page 10.

For results for the year to June 30, 1992, see page 10.

For results for the year to December 31, 1992, see page 10.

For results for the year to June 30, 1991, see page 10.

For results for the year to December 31, 1991, see page 10.

For results for the year to June 30, 1990, see page 10.

For results for the year to December 31, 1990, see page 10.

For results for the year to June 30, 1989, see page 10.

For results for the year to December 31, 1989, see page 10.

For results for the year to June 30, 1988, see page 10.

For results for the year to December 31, 1988, see page 10.

For results for the year to June 30, 1987, see page 10.

For results for the year to December 31, 1987, see page 10.

For results for the year to June 30, 1986, see page 10.

For results for the year to December 31, 1986, see page 10.

For results for the year to June 30, 1985, see page 10.

For results for the year to December 31, 1985, see page 10.

For results for the year to June 30, 1984, see page 10.

For results for the year to December 31, 1984, see page 10.

For results for the year

□ Some modest predictions for 1997 □ Stock-pickers get it right for once □ SFA's rules stiffer than the Met's

□ FINANCIAL forecasting is for mugs. Any pundit who claims to know which way the stock market is going, the outlook for gilt, interest rates and house prices, is no more reliable than the average racing tipster — less so, because the racing world is so riddled with insider dealing that there is a fair chance the tipster got it straight from the jockey.

Most of last year's forecasts from the professionals, the equity analysts whose job it is to second-guess the stock market, for 1996, look pretty sick. Several did so badly that the brokers concerned have refused to make public their stance for 1997 — with experience comes wisdom. They include the securities house that foresaw a plunge in the FTSE-100 Index to 2,800 last year, against the rise of 11 per cent to above 4,100 that took place in the real world.

Ho hum. One assumes this was not reflected in their year-end bonuses, and indeed City fund managers have protected themselves rather well once again this year. It is an odd but proveable fact that stock markets always rise in December, and indeed the Index rose by 1.5 per cent last month, a higher than average monthly rise even for last year, in very thin trading.

Another fact is that fund managers' bonuses tend to be based on year-end to year-end

comparisons of the value of the funds they look after, so yesterday's correction will have had little effect on their pay. Make it all what you will.

So forecasts should be restricted to areas where specialist knowledge puts the pundit ahead of the pack. A degree of wish-fulfilment is allowed — will teenagers finally tire of tipping fruit-flavoured industrial alcohol down their necks? Will Ken and Eddie just once agree on interest rates? Will we at last see the disappearance of that tiresome phrase "feel-good factor"?

Here are *Pennington's* predictions for 1997:

□ At least one quoted football club will run into serious financial difficulties. The share prices of almost all the others, save for a couple of busi... chips such as Manchester United, will crumble. Watch out for the rush of investors to the furnaces.

□ Someone will pay a silly price for a chain of restaurants, citing clear industrial logic. The bidder will be a) Barclays Bank b) British Steel c) AN Other.

□ British Gas will finally admit that its demerger plans, to be

completed by the end of next month according to the time table, must be delayed through lack of management time. The company will be tempted to blame the harsh winter.

□ Sears will finally get out of shoe retailing, four decades after Sir Charles Clore went in. Alternatively, Liam Strong, its chief executive, will be scanning the Jobs Vacant ads. These predictions are not mutually exclusive.

□ There will at last be a political outcry over the selling of chunks of the electricity distribution system to Americans no one has ever heard of before. Ian Lang, president of the board of trade, will shock the market by ignoring all previous precedent.

□ Elsewhere, Mr Lang will ignore precedent and shock the market. And again, just for luck.

□ Stagecoach will but for a bus company, and be referred to the Monopolies Commission. And again. And again.

□ There will be little progress in the pensions miselling scandal, heading for its fourth year since the problem was unearthed by the Securities and Investments Board. Only a tiny proportion of

those affected have so far had their claims settled. This year, that figure will double.

□ The unit trust industry will embark on a five-year decline, to be supplanted by the new Open-Ended Investment Companies (OEICs) which can be created from next Monday. By the time unit trusts are no more, the OEICs will have started their five-year decline, supplanted by something with an even more horrible name.

□ Motor insurance rates will have to rise, allowing the decent firms to make a profit again at the expense of those who, at present, charge you the value of your car to insure it and add the cost of any claims made to next year's premiums.

□ Which? magazine will become involved in a pension product, in the wake of the damning Which? report into all the others. This follows last year's damning report into credit cards, coinciding with the Which? card.

□ A building society final will go sour, after squabbles over bonuses/loss or burnt share certificates/postal problems. Computers will get the blame.

□ One of the big accountants will buy a medium-sized firm of solicitors, so offering clients one-stop shopping. Rates will not fall.

□ Tiny Ronfand will attend the Lonrho annual meeting. He will not propose the vote of thanks to the management.

□ A big/high-profile AIM company will go bust. Alternatively, an AIM company will finally graduate to a full listing. These forecasts are not mutually exclusive, but expect the first some time before the second.

□ A big/much-respected/fast-growing company will go bust, its books irretrievably cooked over a period of years. Its accountants will profess bafflement. A non-executive director will become chairman.

This last is the only racing certainty — but it takes true punditry to spot which company. A Happy New Year to all.

Stock-pickers win in year of the dog

□ BY contrast with the equity strategists, pension fund investment managers earned their keep in 1996, thanks to their long-term fondness for London equities. More surprising, their efforts in picking British shares actually beat the FTSE 100 index, according to figures from the WM Company.

Funds that merely track share indices have become fashionable because the expense of serious stock picking is too often wasted — for why, see above. In 1996, however, all those hours feeding ratios into the laptop, all those lunches ruined by having to stay awake through another company presentation, all those arduous trips to research Diversified Megacorp's Bermuda acquisition, paid off.

Not that fund managers are actually much better pickers of

winners than Whitehall used to be. But they are better than Whitehall, or indices or computers, or astrologers for that matter, at spotting a sure loser.

In yester-year, index funds invested in Maxwell in spite of misgivings. In 1996 they were stuck in big companies such as British Gas, Hanson, BTR and Sears that missed the buoyant year enjoyed by most. Rarely have so many top companies let the side down as in the City's Year of the Dog.

Many — though not all — actively managed funds avoided such stummers, and did the average smaller fund for similar reasons. In the expected tougher climate of 1997, fund members will hope stock pickers meet the challenge again. This will require, however, an equally generous distribution of complete dogs.

A policeman's lot

□ A COUPLE of years ago a broker was caught doddling British Rail by using his girlfriend's pass. He lost his Securities and Futures Authority registration, and so his job and livelihood. Those are the rules — no criminal convictions of any kind. Now a few hundred policemen, no less, have been caught playing fast and loose on the London Tube. Their penalty? Loss of their free travel passes.

GEC's Satchwell is sold to Siebe for £80m

BY PAUL DURMAN

GEC yesterday sold its first business since George Simpson, its new chief executive, outlined the group's disposal plans last month.

Satchwell Controls, of Slough, which makes and installs the temperature systems for large buildings, is being sold to Siebe, the diversified engineering group, for £80 million, including debt.

Siebe intends to make Satchwell the European flagship for its own building

systems business, which currently includes Siebe Environmental Controls in the UK and Barcol Air in Switzerland and The Netherlands.

A Siebe spokesman said the group has annual sales of about £220 million, in this area, but most of these are in America. Satchwell, part of GEC since 1968, is the UK market leader.

Announcing half-year results last month, Mr Simpson said he intended to sell the

business that do not belong in GEC, which is made up of more than 150 separate companies.

Malcolm Bates, GEC's deputy managing director, said yesterday that Satchwell was "out on its own" and provided spin-off benefits for the group's main interests in defence electronics, power systems and telecommunications.

Mr Bates said: "GEC had

always had in its mind to sell Satchwell, but this had not been a priority because the company had done well and not caused any problems.

Satchwell delivered record

sales and profits last year, making £4.9 million on turnover of £60.3 million. It had net assets of £19.4 million at March 31 and employs more than 1,000 people.

Siebe said it intended to retain the "very well-known" Satchwell name. It would not comment on the possibility of job losses, but said was its policy to integrate and build up its acquisitions, not to cut costs for a quick profit. Dr George Sarney, president of Siebe Control Systems, said the new grouping would provide Siebe with a significant new platform for future growth.

GEC is expected to make a

series of further disposals this

year as Mr Simpson restructures the business assembled by Lord Weinstock, his predecessor. One leading candidate for disposal is thought to be the 50 per cent stake in the consumer goods division, which includes Creda cookers and Hotpoint washing machines.

Other possible disposals in

clude the wire and cable

operations, the semi-conduc-

tor and components com-

panies, the office equipment

interests and the medical sys-

tems business.

Tempus, page 26

Gent "strong growth"

Tempus, page 26

Double delight for Vodafone

BY OLIVER AUGUST

VODAFONE, the mobile phone group, doubled the number of overseas subscribers and increased its UK customer base by 20 per cent during the last 12 months.

In the last quarter, new overseas subscribers outstripped the UK numbers for the first time. Some 146,000 Britons connected their mobile phones during the Christmas period, compared with 148,000 abroad. Vodafone now has almost a million overseas customers and 2.8 million in the UK, 1.2 million of whom use the digital network.

Chris Gent, chief executive, said: "There was a strong all-round performance from Vodafone in 1996. The highlight of the year in the UK was the strong growth in our digital network, where the subscriber base increased by 320,000 over 205 per cent, with new connections being supported by a very successful policy of migrating existing customers

from the analogue to the digital network."

"Our overseas businesses collectively produced an exceptional performance and continue to go from strength to strength."

The company said there had been particularly strong

performances in France, Greece and South Africa.

Gent said: "We have

achieved a significant

international expansion

in 1996 and we are

confident that 1997 will

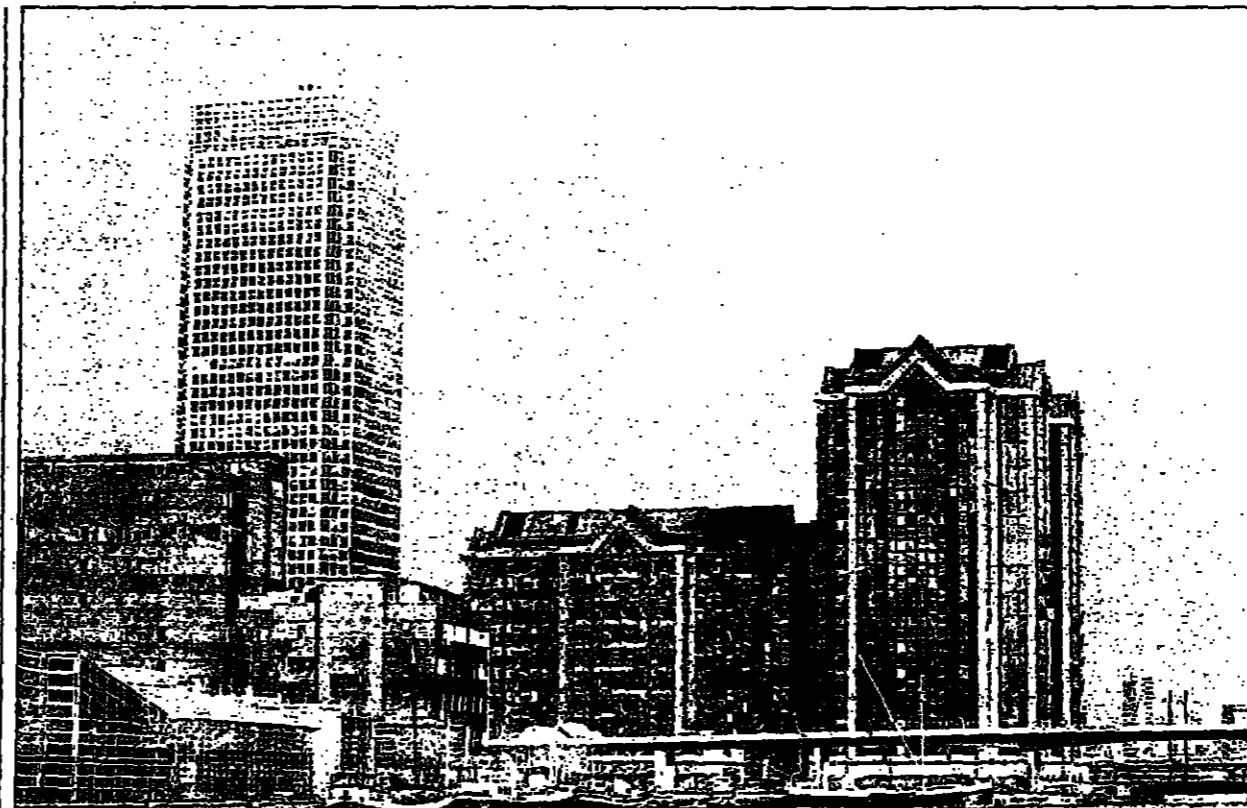
be another year of strong

growth."

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Gent "strong growth"

Tempus, page 26



The IRA Docklands bomb forced Guardian Media to switch to alternative printers, which cost £14.4 million

Guardian Media in the red

GUARDIAN Media Group, publishers of *The Guardian* and *The Observer*, was

pushed into the red by costs arising from the IRA Docklands bombing last year (Oliver August writes).

The blast damaged the group's main printing plant near South Quay, forcing a switch to alternative printers that cost £14.4 million.

Interim results show a £17.9 million profit before exceptional items — up more than 40 per cent. But overall, a £12.75 million pre-tax profit turned into a £1.84 million pre-tax loss for the six months to September 29. Harry Roche, chairman, said the strong operating performance had been achieved despite a 24 per cent rise in newsprint prices, costing an extra £3.5 million.

The group, publisher also of the *Manchester Evening News*, had £154.3 million net assets including cash of £81.6 million and remains financially strong, Mr Roche said.

The McCall International

admitted two charges of mis-

conduct arising from the trans-

fers, but said that it took inde-

pendent accounting advice.

The fine is the biggest yet imposed by Lloyd's, which has

toughened its stance, bringing

in fixed-penalty fines and re-

quiring that disciplinary ac-

tions be made public.

The McCall action centres

and other investors. New backer include Channel Hotels & Properties, controlled by David Kirch, which will have a stake of about 25 per cent.

The shares were is-

sued at 3p, a far cry from the

£150 October 1992 rights issue.

Hopes for Haemocell's Sys-

tem 350, which allows doctors

to use patients' own blood for

transfusions, carried the

shares to a 22p peak in

February 1993.

The decline in the company's

fortunes stemmed initially from

the collapse of its distribution

deal with Stryker Corporation

of the US. Subsequent sales

have been insufficient to cover

Haemocell's costs. Haemocell

hopes to reduce its reliance on

System 350 by distributing

products for a French company,

but has been held back by lack

of resources. Haemocell expects

share dealings on AIM to

reopen on Monday.

Broker fined £15,000 by Lloyd's

A LLOYD'S of London broker has been fined £15,000 and ordered to pay £1,000 in costs, for transferring funds in breach of Lloyd's bylaws (Jon Ashworth writes).

Ian McCall International admitted two charges of misconduct arising from the trans-

fers, but said that it took inde-

pendent accounting advice.

The fine is the biggest yet

imposed by Lloyd's, which has

toughened its stance, bringing

in fixed-penalty fines and re-

quiring that disciplinary ac-

tions be made public.

THE
TIMESCITY
DIARY

Salter makes his move

A NEW YEAR and a new office for Declan Salter. The former joint managing director of Watkinson spent his first day as chief executive of the printing group lugging heavy packing boxes along the company's corridors in Manchester Square.

As one of the perks of his promotion, Salter is swapping his cramped corner of the London HQ for the much larger office of his predecessor, Patrick Walker, who is expected to spend at least three days a week in London as Watkinson's non-executive chairman. "We decided to keep our own desks, otherwise it would have meant emptying all the drawers," chuckles Salter.

Snakes alive

ST PATRICK might claim to have banished snakes from Ireland, but Tony Atovit knows otherwise. Rummaging inside the office photocopier, trying to establish why it wasn't working, the media director at McCann-Erickson, Belfast, advertising agency, came face to face with a black and yellow serpent. "I shot back about 10 feet," he recalls. "We later discovered, it had escaped from City Reptiles on the ground floor and had climbed three sets of stairs to take up residence in my copier." Not bad for an American grass snake.

AMONG SBC Warburg's list of ten UK stocks that it expects to outperform during 1997 — including British Aerospace, British Land, BT, Cadbury, Daimler-Benz, Independent Finance, Rolls-Royce, Royal & Sun Alliance and J Sainsbury — is Mercury Asset Management. Carefully, until 1995 Warburg owned 75 per cent of MAM. Would that were still the case?



"He has gone right off cold turkey"

Name pane

AN OFFICE makeover for Allied Trust Bank, which will henceforth be known as Investors Bank. The huge slab of glass in the foyer of the bank's offices on Dowgate Hill, London, is about to be shown the back door because the inscriptions on the glass signpost no longer make any sense. Since Clive Securities came on board last March, Intergro changed its name to Insinger and now Allied Trust Bank (known as Allied Arab Bank until 1989) has been rechristened. Whether the almighty power will end its days as an ultra-modern coffee table or at the local bank hall has yet to be decided.

Dressing down

STEER clear of Mansion House tomorrow, when 600 children will gather there for the Lord Mayor's annual fancy dress party. Introduced in the last century as a late Christmas celebration for London's underprivileged, the shindig has changed much over the years. These days, guests are more likely to include the children and grandchildren of leaders of London Boroughs, staff at Mansion House and a handful of MPs. Good news is, however, that Roger Cork will not be wearing fancy dress. Keeping his Mayoral robes safely away from the mess of the party, he will be wearing multicoloured

Seeking an EMU escape route

Progress on a single currency is faltering as Europe hits Maastricht buffers

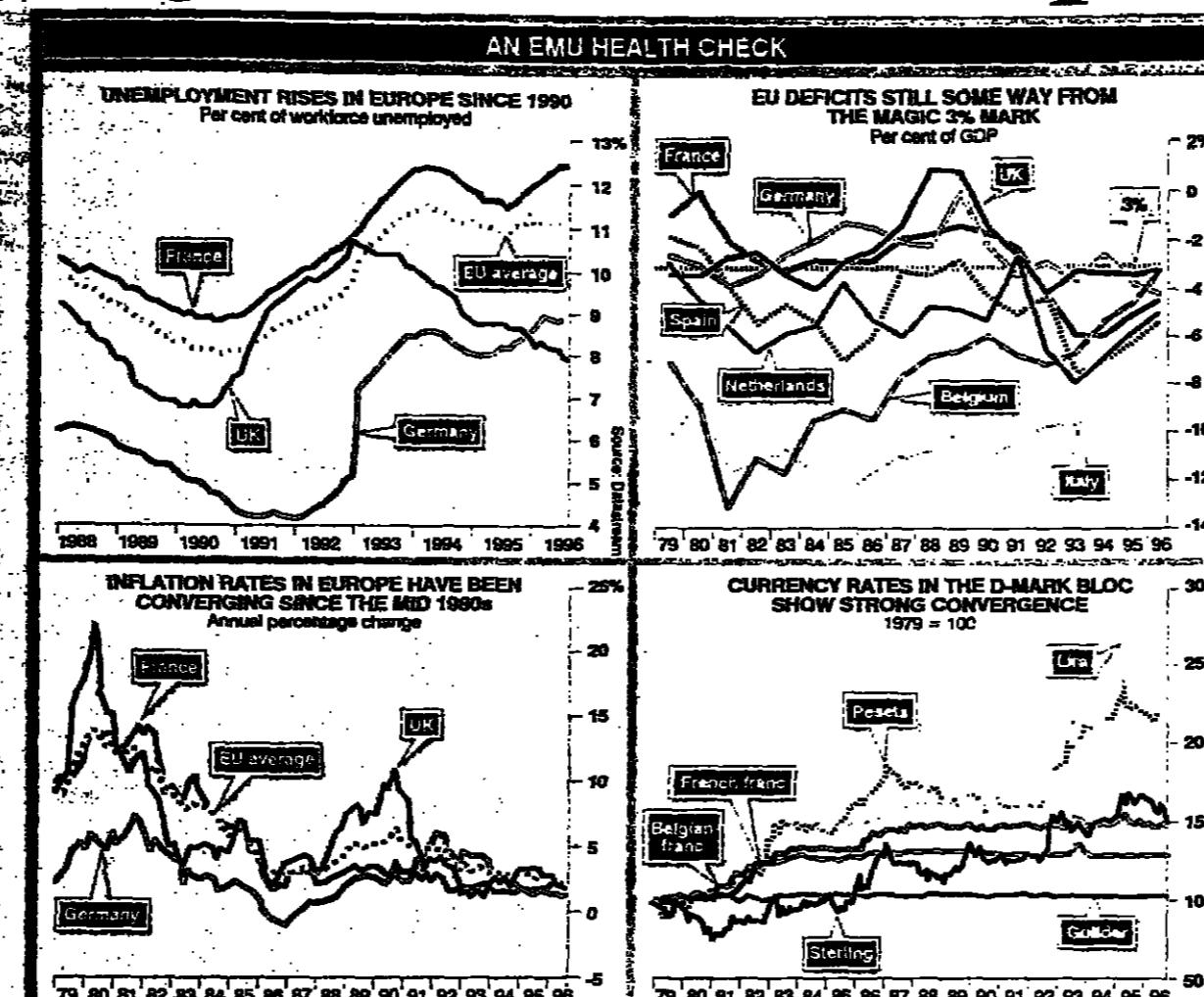
THE NEW year has already been marked by a new traditional southern of Germany from our European partners, offering unconvincing and repeated commitments to the single currency project.

In Germany, the cross-party committee of author of monetary union was delivered on December 31 when Oskar Lafontaine, head of the opposition SPD, and his colleagues in a pro-EMU mass. Chancellor Kohl will face no serious opposition if he wants to press ahead with the launch of the euro in 1999.

In France, years of powerful Government propaganda continued to work its magic on the electorate. A new poll in the weekly *l'Express* shows that 62 per cent of those surveyed expressed the hope that progress towards a single currency will continue this year, in spite of 88 per cent who have no expectation that unemployment will fall from current record levels.

In Frankfurt, central bankers at the European Monetary Institute, doggedly continue with their technical preparations. Despite the mounting dismay felt by many of their number at how the single currency project is progressing at a political level, there is no hint that, mutinously, they regard their work as just a touch hypothetical. On January 10 we are to be treated to a new report on the technical workings of monetary union.

The Single Monetary Policy in Stage Three — Specification of the Operational Framework — will be from a year of progress 1997 could prove to be the year of making excuses. The politics of monetary union were finally distilled, reflected by the end of last year. The consensus is that the economies are looking even worse. For all the positive rhetoric we will inevitably hear over the next few months, it is quite conceivable that Germany, in particular, will be looking for an escape route allowing the 1999 deadline for monetary union to be postponed to the millennium or beyond. What a relief it would be for John Major and Tony Blair if their informed fence-sitting on EMU



Since Maastricht Europe's economies have failed to deliver

domestic product in 1995, from 55 per cent in 1990 and 38 per cent in 1980.

Defenders of Europe's economic record would argue that lower EU inflation — down to an average 3.9 per cent in 1991-95 against 4.9 per cent in 1986-90 — is still an achievement to be treasured but there are many, including Mr Marsh, who believe that inflation would have fallen even without the drive towards monetary union.

This year, growth in the EU is thought likely to rise to

average growth in the European Union fell to 1.4 per cent in 1991-95, compared with 3.3 per cent in 1986-90 and 1.5 per cent in 1983-85, the years when economic stagnation spawned the phrase Euroclerosis. Europe's fiscal position has deteriorated abysmally since the late 1980s. The annual average government borrowing requirement rose to 5.3 per cent in 1991-95, from 3.4 per cent in 1986-90. Since 1990, EU public sector debt has risen by \$2,000 billion to 71 per cent of gross

around 2 per cent, against 1.6 per cent in 1991, but this will not be enough to justify the European Commission's optimistic boast that 12 out of the EU's 15 members will cut their debts to 3 per cent or less of GDP this year, the statistical test year for membership of EMU. The much lower debt criteria — limiting public debt to 60 per cent of GDP — is also going to cause a lot of grief. Countries such as Germany, Austria, Spain, Finland and Sweden have seen their debts

unemployment. Giscard d'Estaing placed a well-timed bomb under the political establishment when he questioned the wisdom of the *franc for policy*. Although the Government cried foul and refused to budge on the sanctity of the franc and the mark, President Jacques Chirac showed that he, too, has concerns about imposing German-style deflation discipline on France by facing down Bonn's demands for automatic sanctions post-EMU for countries running deficits.

To date, Germany has simply given in to France's valiant efforts to build what Bonn and Frankfurt no doubt regard as dangerous ill-discipline into the whole system. The biggest question for 1997 is whether Germany will continue to capitulate. A poll by the Allenbach Institute last May showed that 58 per cent of voters were against monetary union, with 20 per cent for and 22 per cent don't care or don't know. In contrast, 83 per cent of German decision-makers were pro EMU, with 15 per cent against and 2 per cent don't care.

Voters are not listened to often but their views do hold weight at election time, at

least. If British politicians seem more sensitive than many of their European counterparts to voters' scepticism on the single currency, it is only because the election is imminent. But Germany's politicians face an election in October 1998. If one wants to conjure up a flavour of the democratic will they might be up against it.

There will be ceremonies all over Germany celebrating the 50th anniversary of the mark, the precious token of post-war stability and achievement.

It is more than likely that the proportion of ordinary Germans opposed to giving up the mark will have risen since the Allenbach poll last May. Many will not be best pleased with all the outrageous accounting fiddles being nodded through by the European Commission as it collides with countries trying to meet the Maastricht criteria.

Even less acceptable is the sight of President Chirac outgunning Chancellor Kohl on the stability part at the Dublin summit.

All this makes the wait-and-see position of the British Conservative and Labour parties look eminently sensible and reinforces the impression that, however eagerly continental Euro-enthusiasts await a Blair government for a more positive British approach to EMU, they are likely to be disappointed — even if Labour wins.

Labour has made it clear that it wants proof that the single currency would be good for Britain economically. The accumulating evidence points the other way — at the very least on the 1999 timetable, which is wreaking such damage. Politically, EMU is not likely to be the subject closest to Mr Blair's heart in the early days of his administration. He is already committed to referenda on Scottish and Welsh devolution and current polls suggest that a referendum on Europe would come up with a no vote anyway. And, amid all the furor about Conservative splits over Europe, it should be remembered that Labour has a considerable band of its own rebels who, with an election win under their belts, would not hesitate to voice their views. Even with a reasonable majority, Mr Blair is unlikely to want to annoy them with so much other pressing business to pursue.

Britain's non-participation could provide Germany with one excuse for delay, a spring assault on the Italian lira another. Both would allow Bonn to divert the blame for postponing EMU to two tried and tested European scapegoats: Britain and Anglo-Saxons on speculators.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Hasten relief for names

From Sir Eric Yarrow
Sir. Many resigned Lloyd's names paid their final bill in September, with varying degrees of difficulty and in some cases, involving the sale of shares, with subsequent capital gains liability or having to obtain a bank loan incurring interest charges.

There is now a further burden in that it seems a refund of tax from the Inland Revenue, in some cases a considerable amount, will not be received until the spring of 1997 or possibly even later.

Surely in the circumstances a determined effort should be made by all concerned to reduce this time scale.

Yours faithfully,

ERIC YARROW,

Cloak, Kilmacolm,

Renfrewshire.

Boeing merger a gift for UK

From Mr Dick Winchester
Sir, The merger between Boeing and McDonnell Douglas (*The Times*, December 16) reduces competition in the aircraft industry and represents an enormous opportunity for the UK and Europe to step in and grab a much larger chunk of the market.

Accordingly, I look forward to reading that, just as their American counterparts would, UK financial institutions are holding talks to determine how they can work with industry and government in making the best of this wonderful Christmas present. Strange, I've just seen a 400-seater pink pig go over at 35,000 feet!

Yours faithfully,
DICK WINCHESTER,
The Old Schoolhouse,
Old Rayne, Aberdeenshire.

Accounting 'error'

From Mr Francis J. Bergin
Sir, The news (*The Times*, December 5) that the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants is setting up yet another institute is profoundly depressing. Surely what is needed is a reduction in the number of chartered and non-chartered bodies, not the creation of an additional one.

This proposal also seems to run counter to all the discussions on integration over the past 30 years.

Yours faithfully,
FRANCIS J. BERGIN,
Elstree House,
Elstree Way,
Borehamwood,
Hertfordshire.

Waterstone aims to prove that success is child's play



Tim Waterstone has high hopes for his new chain

aspiring to offer the same sort of clothes sold by Sophie Mirman at her two London childrenswear stores. Trotters, Mr Waterstone thinks her clothes are "wonderful", but the suggestion that the two 80s retail stars could work together is greeted with a guffaw. "There wouldn't be room for our two egos," he says.

The first branch of Daisy & Tom will open on the Kings Road, London, in May. It will not be as expensive or exclusive as Harrods, he says, but the clothes will be a little bit smarter than those sold at Gap-Kids which provides most of the clothes for his own small children. He says he is

Garden, Islington and Kingston. He also likes the idea of opening abroad. "It is perfect for Europe. Paris would be a knockout," he reckons.

As the father of eight, from three marriages, Mr Waterstone has a store of knowledge about children. He also has a special knowledge of children's books, but his worry when the Daisy & Tom concept first came to him, late in 1995, was that he would not be able to find the right people to handle the other departments. He has spent much of the last year hiring key staff, including Marian Hill, Harrods' childrenswear buyer of 20 years.

Considering that work is only now about to begin on the first Daisy & Tom branch, Mr Waterstone and his partners — DC Thomson and Qwest — already have a very clear idea of what they want to do with the company. One year after the first three branches have begun trading, they want it to float on AIM. Then, as soon as possible, they want to move the company on to the main exchange. Mr Waterstone will remain both chief executive and chairman until the company is on the main exchange.

Mr Waterstone says he is thoroughly confident that this is the right time to start up Daisy & Tom. He had a great 80s, founding Waterstone's in 1982 and nursing it through expansion, deep recession and sale. But now, he says, "feels better than the 80s, when it was all so debt driven. This does not feel like a bubble about to burst."

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THE TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT

Ryanair scheduled for market take-off on route to Europe

Executives at Ryanair, the independent Irish airline, take their no-frills company motto very seriously. A recent telephone request to speak to Michael O'Leary, Ryanair's chief executive, at company headquarters in Dublin airport was greeted with a nervous giggle and a surprising explanation. "Oh, he's not around here. He's probably down with the rest of them loading the luggage," said a secretary. "There's nothing much going on in administration and the rest of them are run off their feet so they all go down to help out."

Although Mr O'Leary and his senior colleagues spent Christmas tucking up their muscles on the luggage ramps, the new year will see them back in serious executive mode to prepare for one of the

most challenging periods of their airline's turbulent 11-year history.

It is believed that Ryanair is preparing to float on the Dublin Stock Exchange within months. Although the company refuses to comment, market analysts say that the airline has been in discussions with exchange officials since last September.

The company, which claims to have pioneered the low-fares/no-frills approach to flying in Europe, has shaken the industry to its foundations in Ireland. Set up by Tony Ryan, an entrepreneur in 1985, the airline attracted instant applause from travellers who had long complained about the high prices charged by Aer Lingus, a state-owned carrier. Initially Ryanair concentrated on one of the busiest routes in

Eileen McCabe follows the flightpath of Ireland's successful independent airline

Europe — Dublin to London — and gradually muscled in on the Dublin to Birmingham, Manchester and Glasgow routes. But despite its popularity with the public, Ryanair hit serious turbulence in 1990 and was forced to undergo an extensive restructuring, including redundancies and route reductions.

Much to Aer Lingus's dismay, Ryanair re-emerged with its old agenda intact. The company continued to embarrass Aer Lingus by undercutting even its most discounted fares and launched regular broadsides against the

fees charged by Aer Rianta, the state-owned controller of Ireland's airports. The financial turnaround has been impressive. After a loss for the year to December 1990 of almost £127 million (£6.4 million), Ryanair notched up a profit of £129.000 in 1991. Over the following three years the profits gradually increased, and for the 15 months to March 1995, Ryanair made profits of almost £15.5 million.

From a high of 13 routes in 1990, Ryanair cut back to five in 1992. Since then it has steadily built back up and by

last year once again boasted a network of 13 routes. They include flights from Dublin to Stansted, Gatwick, Luton, Cardiff and Glasgow.

According to Ryanair, passenger numbers have jumped from 126,000 in 1990 to three million last year. The company claims to have captured a 37 per cent share of the Dublin to London route and 52 per cent of the Dublin to provincial UK routes.

Ryanair has now set its sights on the wider European market. Recently it announced the purchase of six Boeing 737 aircraft from Lufthansa for US\$60 million to service a series of new low-fare services from Stansted to several European cities, including Paris and Brussels. The company has also warned the airport authority and the Irish public

that if Aer Rianta does not reduce its passenger charges from about £15.5 per person to close to the Stansted level of £12, then Dublin will not figure in Ryanair's expansion plans.

And those may not stop at Europe, if the recent acquisition of a 20 per cent stake in Ryanair by David Bonderman, an American businessman, is anything to go by. Mr Bonderman, who runs the Texas Pacific Group investment company, was a key player in the turnaround of both Continental and America West airlines. His track record in the US — and the fact that in November Mr Ryan stepped aside as chairman in the American's favour — tend to indicate that a flotation on the Dublin exchange may happen sooner rather than later.

Richard Thomson on the US investment dilemma

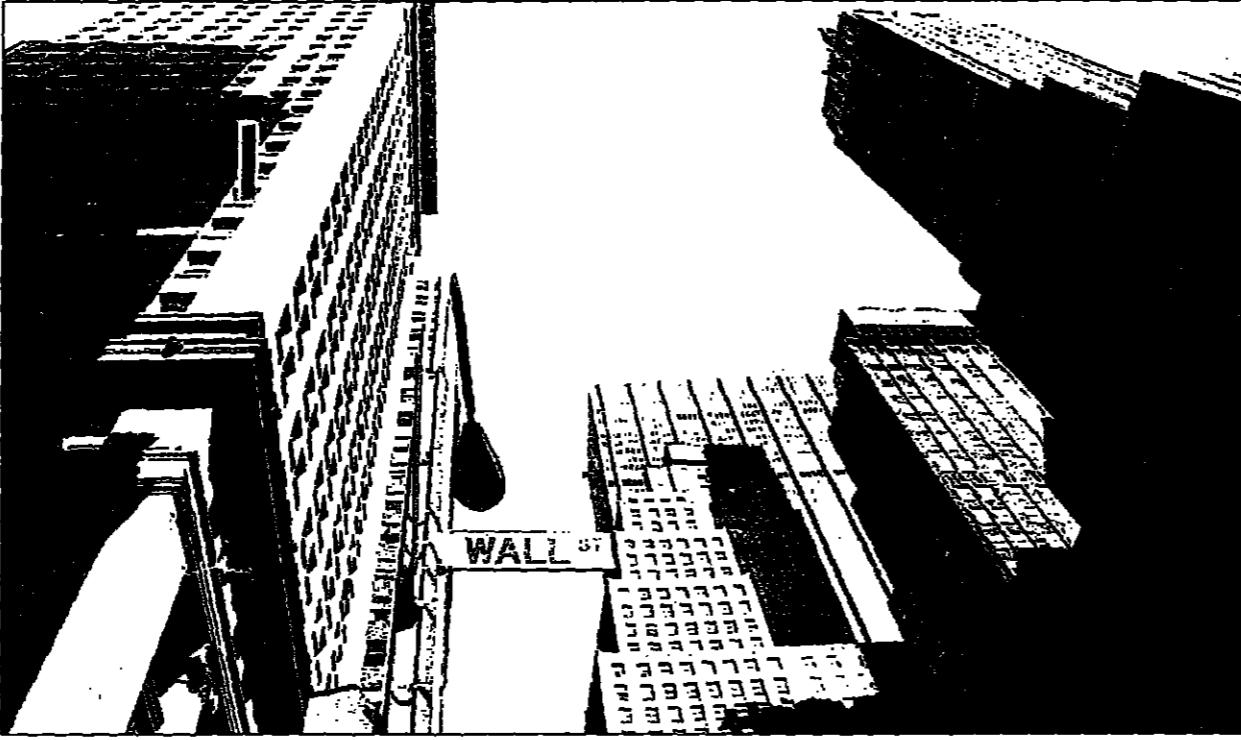
Question of values on Wall Street

A 101-point fall on the final day of trading on Wall Street in 1996 brought to an uncertain end a record-setting year for equities in America, making it even more difficult to forecast the likely outcome for 1997.

Bullish analysts and investors who insist that the way is still up easily outnumber the bears who claim that shares are heading for a fall which could, at worst, be catastrophic. A year ago, however, the bears were more numerous and turned out to be totally wrong. This time, will it be the bulls who are proved wrong?

The bullish argument is fairly simple: the conditions that sent the market up by more than 25 per cent in 1996 will not change radically in 1997. Inflation will stay low at around 3.5 per cent, as will interest rates, helped by the recent steep fall in the US budget deficit. Even if interest rates did start to rise, it would not have a significant impact on inflation during 1997. Corporate profits, meanwhile, will continue to rise as companies benefit from low interest rates and moves towards greater efficiency. Inflation-adjusted price earnings ratios are right in line historically with the current inflation level, so the market is not overvalued.

Abby Joseph Cohen, market strategist at Goldman Sachs, is typical of the bulls, seeing further growth but at a slightly slower rate. "I am still bullish,



Wall Street saw out a record-setting year with a 101-point fall, making it even more difficult to chart 1997

but I'm not as exuberantly or ebulliently bullish as in the past. There are still good value stocks to buy." Her favourite choices are small capital and technology stocks.

In the other camp stands a select but influential band of analysts whose hair stands on end when they contemplate current market valuations. To them, all traditional methods

of valuing stocks show the market is way beyond its historical norms. The dividend yields on S & P 500 shares, for instance — one of the standard US methods of valuing the market — is at its lowest level on record, indicating that shares are grossly overvalued.

To some extent, this is an argument about which value

measures to use. What is striking about the bullish side, however, is a willingness to jettison the measures that used to be considered sacrosanct but which now inconveniently suggest that prices are far too high. The bulls spend a lot of time explaining why the old measures no longer apply. In effect, they are saying that things are different this time.

The bears, meanwhile, reinforce their point that economic conditions simply will not stay as favourable in the coming year. Companies have already squeezed all the extra costs and productivity gains they can out of their operation over the past few years. To expect more is unrealistic.

We are almost certainly at the bottom of the interest rate and inflation cycle. There is little doubt the US economy is fairly robust, which may lead to higher inflation and a consequent rise in interest rates. In any case, the bears argue, it is foolish to bet against an interest rate rise, because of the attitude of the Federal Reserve Board and Alan Greenspan, its chairman.

Mr Greenspan terrified the markets shortly before Christmas by suggesting that share prices were suffering from "irrational exuberance". He has

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

COMPANY NOTICES

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the 85th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE COMPANY will be held on Friday 31 January 1997 at 18.00 hours at the premises of the Company at 1 Avenue de la Reine, 100-102, 75016 Paris, France or the Registered Office at Harry House, 202-204 New Bond Street, London W1A 2DH, on Friday 31 January 1997 at 14.00 hours, not later than 24 hours before the time of the meeting will be accepted.

DATE 31 January 1997

BY R. Stover FCA

Secretary

Harry House

202-204 New Bond Street

London SW1W 4DH

12 December 1996

NOTICE OF MEETING OF THE MEMBERS

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Sharp falls in thin trading

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Stock	Company	Price	Yield	P/E	Change	High	Low	Stock	Company	Price	Yield	P/E	Change	High	Low	Stock	Company	Price	Yield	P/E	Change	High	Low	
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES																								
100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
101	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
102	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
103	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
104	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
105	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
106	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
107	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
108	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
109	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
110	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
111	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
112	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
113	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
114	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
115	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
116	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
117	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
118	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
119	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
120	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
121	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
122	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
123	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
124	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
125	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
126	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
127	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
128	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
129	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
130	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
131	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
132	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100	100	100
133	Amstel	100	100	100	-100	100</td																		

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE



■ VISUAL ART

How Baroness Thyssen amassed her own collection of art, a wide variety of more than 500 paintings



■ OPERA

The Royal Opera begins an uncertain 1997 with an upbeat New Year's Day revival of *Chérubin*



■ TOMORROW

Jeremy Kingston on the return to London of Cirque du Soleil's circus extravaganza *Saltimbanco*



■ MONDAY

Robert Lepage brings his *Elsinore* to the National Theatre. Read Benedict Nightingale's verdict

VISUAL ART: As her collection tours China, Baroness Thyssen tells Isabel Carlisle what inspires her

Lady with a Latin passion for art

Carmen Cervera, as she is still popularly known in Spain, is something of a national heroine, which has only a little to do with the fact that she was once crowned Miss Spain. In 1965 she married the German steel magnate Baron Hans Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza, and was instrumental in his decision in 1988 to decline Margaret Thatcher's offer of a new museum at Canary Wharf for his collection of Old Master and modern paintings.

The art, including Holbein's portrait of Henry VIII, went instead to Madrid. As part of its deal the Spanish Government paid for a £220 million restructuring of the Villahermosa Palace near the Prado, for which Baroness Thyssen

I collect because I have this inner feeling, and to improve the collection.

BARONESS THYSSEN

chose the marble floors and the apricot-pink walls.

My meeting with the baron and baroness in the Villahermosa, to talk about her own recently formed collection, coincided with a press conference at which art and political diplomacy were again combined. Baroness Thyssen and the Chinese Ambassador in Madrid were putting their signatures to a sponsorship deal: the baroness's paintings are to be shown in Peking, and Chinese Eastern Airlines had offered to fly them out. The Baron, who sent 14 exhibitions of his collection to the Soviet Union during the Brezhnev era, says: "We believe in the diplomacy of art because it brings people and countries closer together. The Chinese were looking for an exhibition that combined American 19th-century works, Impressionist paintings and Picasso; all of which Carmen has."

It is no coincidence that these are also the strengths of the baron's own collection, started by his father in the 1920s and greatly expanded

A recent triumph was *Bull Fight in Elbar* by the 19th-century Spanish painter Ignacio Zuloaga y Zabala, which the Thyssens bought from Sotheby's saleroom in New York for just over a million dollars. It shows a makeshift bullring in the central plaza of a Spanish mountain town, with locals crowding round to talk and watch the fighting. It is a

museum-quality painting, and a key work in terms of the baroness's collection, from an artistic period on which she has concentrated her buying. I have always been in love with 19th- and 20th-century Spanish painting and no one, not even museums, has collected these paintings seriously, she says. A very strong link exists between them and

French and American paintings of the same date."

American landscapes by 19th-century artists such as Albert Bierstadt and Frederic Church, with their vermillion sunsets and bright yellow dawns, were snapped up in the 1970s by the baron when museums and clubs were eager to raise cash for buying Impressionists. Several have

found their way into the baroness's collection, together with colourful "genre" scenes of everyday life a hundred or more years ago by little-known artists; major works by Gauguin of Martinique and Tahiti; an early painting by Picasso called *The Harvesters*; a Kandinsky or two; a couple of Canalettes; a little Goya picture of *Beggars at a Fountain*; and others. In all there are more than 500 paintings, valued in March this year by the Spanish magazine *Antena* at £125 million.

In terms of quality the collection is uneven. Genre scenes are particularly prone to sliding into the chocolate-box league, and the baroness admits her enthusiasms are

for people and colour, as well as light and water. That may well change. Collections evolve over time and one has hardly begun, driven by the vagaries of a new-found passion (some collectors call it an addiction). "I collect because I have this inner feeling and I collect in order to make the collection better. I like art because artists paint what they feel. I don't have

any long-term plans for the collection but it makes me happy to continue the Thyssen tradition," says the baroness, who is now the only Thyssen collecting on a large scale.

● From Zurbaran to Picasso, paintings from the collection of Baroness Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza are at the China National Gallery in Peking from January 24 to March 9



The 500 paintings in Baroness Thyssen's collection include this early Picasso, *The Harvesters*; works by Gauguin; a Kandinsky or two, a couple of Canalettes and a little Goya

THE TIMES CROSSWORDS

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OPERA: John Allison on a fine revival of *Chérubin* at Covent Garden

Satisfying sex'n'sentiment

AS IF anxious not to waste a moment before Covent Garden's closure, the Royal Opera began a most uncertain 1997 with an upbeat New Year's Day revival of *Chérubin*. Casting Massenet's light *comédie chantée* with strength from top to bottom, and persuading the conductor John Eliot Gardiner to make one of his all-too-rare appearances in a British opera house, it hardly resembled the company that only last autumn was churning out standard repertoire in a string of lacklustre revivals.

Chérubin is too insubstantial to be standard repertoire, but it does not deserve its neglect or even the sneering "sex'n'sentiment" gibes of the composer's detractors. Its unpretentious plot takes up the story of the post-*Figaro* *Chérubin*, at 17 enjoying a very amorous education in spite of the efforts of his tutor. He chases every skirt that

moves, including that of L'Ensoleillad, a prima ballerina who happens to be the King of Spain's mistress; but she drops him with a song extolling the advantages of a one-night stand, and he is at last united with Nina, the girl-next-door who has always loved him.

With the exception of L'Ensoleillad's enchanting *Aubade*, the fluent, frothy music is attractive rather than memorable; the elderly Massenet's inspiration was perhaps wearing thin when he composed the opera for its St Valentine's Day premiere in 1905 at Monte Carlo. But Gardiner paces the piece to perfection, never allowing sentiment to spill over into sentimentality; the score's many elements, from Spanish pastiche to an apt *Don Giovanni* quotation at the close, are gathered up into one satisfying whole.

But *Chérubin* would not

sparkle so without Tim Albery's production, which the director himself has returned to supervise. Recognising that the piece lacks the satirical bite of *Offenbach*, Albery nevertheless stages it as an operetta with gags that are never overplayed. Antony

McDonald's storybook, Dufy-inspired designs are beguiling, and alert to the emotional temperature of each act.

Above all, it is the case that makes this *Chérubin* unmissable. Susan Graham returns to the (travestie) title role, her rich and wonderfully focused high mezzo matched to crisp words and a very physical portrayal of the ardent adolescent. Robert Lloyd is again fine as *Le Philosophe*, but the objects of the boyish passion are all new: Elizabeth Futral, a glittering L'Ensoleillad, Alison Hagley a devoted Nina, and Nicole Tibbles in her Royal Opera debut as the Countess. William Dazeley stands out in his house debut as the Count, joining Ryland Davies's Duke and Thomas Allen's deliciously camp Baron to make up the powder-puff trio that plays for unashamed laughs.

JOHN ALLISON

Unlucky in love: Elizabeth Futral and Susan Graham

THEATRE

The Marriage

of Figaro

Abbey, Dublin

Jai deux Amours and a protracted dance scene that leaves the large cast gasping for air. *The Marriage of Figaro* lacks exuberance.

The language of farce is clearly not one that the director, Brian Brady, speaks with any fluency. Lust, hy-

pocrisy and subterfuges are all givens here, but he does not come close to knowing why any of them is funny.

Spacing is a problem.

Even when embracing,

the cast seem strangely isolated

one from the other, acting

into too much empty space.

Bennett makes a fair Figaro,

skating along manipulative, worldly and plain dumb,

but his interactions

always register a degree or

two below body temperature.

Ariff, so impressive re-

cently in *Good Morning Mr*

Collins, here almost entirely

lost in the undergrowth as

Suzanne.

Even with pauses for en-

trance in the shape of a

cocktail party, the cast

never quite get into the

groove.

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CHOICE 1

Miyako Yoshida
heads the cast as
Swan Lake returns
to Covent Garden

VENUE: Tonight at the
Royal Opera House



CHOICE 2

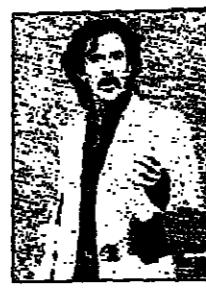
Holiday on Ice
begins an
eight-city
British tour

VENUE: Tonight at the
Brighton Centre



POP 1

**The hot new sound
of Sweden:**
Popsicle's latest
release blends pop
melody with
indie melancholy



POP 2

Meet Tony Ferrino,
the "Portuguese
singing sensation"
and the latest
incarnation of
Steve Coogan

in de
am the

here's the

Camp
Scot

LONDON
ELISINORE Robert Lepage's
astonishing performance as Hamlet and
everyone else in his magnificently
technically innovative production has
performed in 10 cities.
National Theatre, South Bank, SE1
(0171-429 2322) Opens tomorrow,
7.30pm Then Mon-Sat 7.30pm, mat
Wed and Sat 2.30pm

SWAN LAKE Limited tickets are
available for the Royal Ballet's revival of
Anthony Dowd's production of Swan
Lake, with Karen Robins, with Maykelo
Rocha and Irakli Mukhamedashvili. The
leading roles on January 8, 9, 18, 21, 22,
24, 25 and February 1 will be danced
by David Hallberg, with Kristinn Sylve
Clausen, Jonathan Cope, Delphine Bell,
Royal Opera House, Covent Garden,
London WC2 (0171-304 4000) Tonight,
7pm Then various times

TRAVELLING OPERA The company
began its tenth winter tour with a
performance tonight of Mozart's
most popular opera, Don Giovanni. Richard
Mann and James Meek will share the
lead role, with Andrew Forbes, Leopoldine and
Mariana Wall as Donna Anna. On Saturday, the
company will present a new production of
Verdi's La traviata, in a reveal of
Yvonne's tragic love story directed by
Peter Hall. Barbican, Silk Street, EC2 (0171-638
8891) Tonight-Sun, 7.30pm

**THE BEAUTY QUEEN OF
LEISURE** Check out for Marni
McGinn's well-crafted and gripping
drama of love lost in *Commissars*. A
change of cast brings Jane Birkin as
the insatiable Anna. Marni McGinn's
Royal Court (Duke of York's), St
Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-565 5000)
Mon-Sat 7.30pm, mat Sat 3.30pm
Until January 18

BEER, NO CHICKEN Deep
Walkers' 15th farce, set in Thatched
Court, has a new director, Otto
Löpaci's Auto-Kroger and Authentic Röck
Shop. Yvonne Brewster directs for
Talawa Theatre Co. Trafalgar, 26 High Road, NW8
(0181-748 2000) Mon-Sat 8pm, Sun
Wed 2pm & 7.30pm, Sun 5pm, Sat 8pm,
4pm Until February 1

BOB KINGDOM The man of
several boxes returns with his one-
man show in *Reptiles*, *Dylan* and
The Troubadour. Trafalgar, 74
Lydia Street, King Street, Hammersmith, W6 (0181-741 8701)
Today, 4.30pm and 7.30pm Then
Mon-Sat 8pm Until January 11

CASH ON DELIVERY Bradley
Wash in farcical about
trading amorous favours and
dancing with the Devil. Ray
Whitstable, Whitemill, SW1 (0171-369
1735) Mon-Fri 8pm Sat 9pm
3.30pm Mat Wed 3pm Until Jan 4

NEW RELEASES

SHINE (12) Child prodigy pianist
composes under the strain. Uplifting,
often funny treatment of a true story
from Australian director Scott Hicks. With
Geoffrey Rush. Rating: 4.5 out of 5 (29/291) *Orpheus*
10171-361 3742 (Capitol Picture
House) 0171-398 3323 *Curzon*
Mayfair 0171-935 5777 *Gate* 0171-
721 0423 *Odyssey* *Mayfair*
10171-935 5777 *Regent* 0171-
914 6681 *Richmond* 10161-332 0030
Finz 0171-371 2121 *Screen* 0171-
911 0171-435 3366 *Warner* 0171-
437 4243

SLEEPERS (15) Reform school
mates converge themselves on an
impressive cast (Kevin Bacon, Brad Pitt,
Robert De Niro, Dustin Hoffman,
ABC Baker Street) 0171-935 5777
Capitol Picture House 0171-935
3323 *Curzon* 0171-398 3323
10161-940 5011 *Marble Arch* 01426
914666 *Odyssey* 0171-914 0501
Screen 0171-371 2121 *Warner* 0171-
437 4243

CURRENT

♦ **DAYLIGHT** (10) A *Star Wars* dialogue
about the separation of humanity
from the galaxy's dark force

Artistic odd-couple disaster movie

WEEKEND CHOICE

A daily guide to arts
and entertainment
compiled by Gillian Maxey

YOUNG ARTISTS NEW YEAR
SERIES

The Park Lane Group's annual
display begins on Sunday and runs
until January 10. Only performers by gifted
young artists will be chosen by
an imaginative programme of
contemporary music. The series begins
with Ivan Hewitt sharing a discussion
between Morton Hayes and Anthony
Parsons on Sunday, 1pm, in the Purcell
Room, South Bank, SE1 (0171-960
4242)

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM Conductor Lawrence
Foster and the City of Birmingham
Symphony Orchestra begin the new
year with two concerts of Verdi's
masterpieces and pieces by
the City's young contemporary
Symphony Hall, Broad Street (0121-
321 3333) Tomorrow, 3pm and 7pm

BRIGHTON HALL

On Friday, 3pm, the Hall
of the Royal Opera House, Covent
Garden, London WC2 (0171-304 4000) Tonight,
7pm Then various times

giant robot from a computer game
Glyndebourne 0171-203 2681
Closes 7.30pm Sat 8pm, 8.30pm
Sun, 8pm Sun, 10.30pm, 10pm
Tue-Thurs, 2pm, Fri 7.30pm Until
January 10. Next in Earlsfield, Westford
Arena 01990 321 3221

PRESTON

The Halle Orchestra
begins its new year with a series of
Verdi's masterpieces, including *Overture
to Die Fledermaus*, *Tales from the
Vienna Woods* and the *Trisch-Trisch*.
Pops On Sunday, the orchestra travels
to the Royal Exchange, Manchester
for a family concert (8pm), with more
Verdi music at 7.30pm Guild Hall, Lancaster Road 01772
259858, Tonight, 7.30pm

LONDON GALLERIES

Alan Crieff Colour Etching 0171-
439 1866 British Museum
Mythology of Ancient China 0171-636
1525 Chinese Art 0171-636 1526
Richard Turtle Grey Walls Work (0171-
436 2643) *Countess* Se William
Chambers, Architect to George
III, 1761-72, Royal Academy
Graham (0171-274 2739) *Museums* of London Wharfside Glass: The Art of
James Powell & Sons (0171-
500 0581) *Nautilus* John
M. Parker Photography 1900-
1995 (0171-316 0056) Royal Academy
Living Bridges (0171-439 7438)
Tate Turner Prize Exhibition (0171-867
8000) *V & A: American Photo-
graphy* 1930-1935 (0171-938 6349/9441)

WICKED SONGS

Bob Hoskins plays a music professor
in *Wicked Songs*, a new musical
about young performers (James Corden). Eliza
Moshinsky directs Jon Marantz's play
Gleigier, Shakespearian Avenue, W1
(0171-994 5065) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm
mat Sun, 3pm, 4pm Sun, 7pm

LAUGHING SPOTS

Jeffrey (0171-203 2681) *Wicked Songs*
rehearses the much-purloined part
of *God's Own Country* in a new
version of *God's Own Country* at the
Cottesloe, Shakespeare Avenue, W1
(0171-494 5040) Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat
Wed, 2.30pm, Sat 4pm

THE LEARNED LADIES

Steven Pimlott's revival of Molère's *Shear*
of London (0171-994 5065)

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of
films in London and (where
available) across the country
on release across the country

BECOME INVISIBLE

Victoria Chaplin and John Baileys' *Thieves*
return with their strange and
dramatic evocation of the art of circus
Marionette, Sadlers' Wells, Old
Red Lion, 418 St. Martin's Lane, EC1
(0171-937 6161) Opens, 8pm, Sat
Then Sun, 8pm Until January 12

YOU'LL BE DOG

Three women and one male mad are the characters
in Robbie McElhenney's first stage play,
directed by Andrea Brooks. Transfer
from the Old Red Lion, 418 St. Martin's Lane, EC1
(0171-937 6161) Opens, 8pm, Sat
Then Sun, 8pm Until January 25

LAUGHTER ON THE BROAD

Floor

Jeffrey (0171-994 5065) Mon-Sat, 8pm
Then Sun, 8pm Until January 26

LAUGHING ON THE BROAD

Jeffrey (0171-994 5065) Mon-Sat, 8pm
Then Sun, 8pm Until January 27

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Relax, pop-pickers, the music is better than the name: Sweden's Popsicle are "a sort of halfway house between the Lemonheads and Dodgy".

A sucker for sentiment

POP ALBUMS: David Sinclair taps a foot to
Popsicle and the happening sound of Sweden

RICK WILSON

Suitable Language
(Third Force/RITM TRCD 001)
AN UNUSUALLY inquisitive
percussionist, Rick Wilson
straddles the divide between the
flowing world rhythms of
the WOMAD festivals, where
he has taught percussion, and
the fierce, brittle experimentalism
of the English avant-garde, where he first made his
mark in groups including the
Work and Family Fodder.

Not surprisingly, Wilson's
debut album, *Suitable Language*, keeps on the move both
stylistically and culturally. With its tense, grumbling
piano lines and rumbling
interweave of Agere drum,
bodhran and congas, *Ride/Override* is full of mystery and
danger. *Acts of Feet* builds up a tremendous, galloping
momentum with the exotic sounds of chenda,
darabuka, seed pods, gongs and a "thunder shaker" being
seamlessly integrated with regular tom toms, bass drum
and cymbals.

Produced by P.J. Harvey's
recent collaborator John Parish,
who also plays drums throughout,
it is a collection that dissects relationships in
slow and mordant detail during *Our Destinies Were Inter-
twined*, and attempts to get
to the bottom of "how you really
feel about the stuff of your life" in
A Feeling Mission.

Unfortunately, in the way of melody or uplift
in the ambling and often
disjointed arrangements to act as
balm on the raw emotions thus exposed, and the album
stands as a rather grey and
joyless monument to Merri-
man's uncompromising
integrity.

THE HARVEST
MINISTERS

Orbit (Setanta SETCD33)

WHILE the Swedes have the
week's best tunes and Portugal
can apparently lay claim to the
most outrageous chat-up lines, the
Irish remain the undisputed spiritual
guardians of pop's common market.
Orbit is the third album by the
Harvest Ministers from Dule
inlin and, despite the group's
identity, it is essentially a vehicle
for the songs and singing of Will Merriman, a
man with some ominously
imponderable themes on his
mind.

On songs such as *Valley of our Souls*, which he dedicates to "my friend, philosopher,
philanthropist and spiritual guru, Hugh Heffner", and *Other Men's Wives* ("Morals? Who cares! A stud must have
more than one"), Merriman's
bed-hopping, Mediterranean crooner with engag-
ingly merdes wit.

Coogan has done his home-
work and the facile, easy-
listening musical style of
Phenomenon is suitably convincing. His "1980 Eurovision
Song Contest winner", *Papa
Bendi*, is especially excruciating.
But even the best jokes tend to pall after a couple of
hearings, and the humour here is rather one-dimensional,
as suggested by titles including *Lap Dancing Lady*,
Fishing For Girls, *Man Sal-
lion and Short Term Affair* (a
duet with Björk taking the role
of a nubile au pair).

While various TV specials
will ensure that Ferrino is
firmly clutched to the bosom
of our iron-loving nation, one
imagines *Phenomenon* might
receive a rather cooler reception
in Portugal.

On songs such as *Valley of our Souls*, which he dedicates to "my friend, philosopher,
philanthropist and spiritual guru, Hugh He



■ POP 3

A sneak preview of what's hip and happening in 1997 from David Bowie, celebrating his half-century



■ POP 4

... to that eagerly awaited third album from the undisputed kings of Britpop, Oasis



■ POP 5

Caitlin Moran is putting her money on Tiger. "definitely as big as 1997 deems it tasteful for bands to be"



■ JAZZ

Out now: *The Complete Legendary Rockland Palace Concert*, a must for Charlie Parker completists

What will we be listening to in 1997? Times writers keep an ear to the ground and a weather eye on the main chance

I'm in demand, I am the beat

Simply everyone, from the Prodigy to U2 and David Bowie, will be laying down a groove on the dance floor. Paul Sexton reports

As the high street shelves are refilled with the first new music of 1997, the traditional winter-ends debate is on again. Are we in for 12 months of British music shaped by the share dividends of multinationals corporations, or will this be a year in which home-grown creativity comes charging to the rescue? The new year's ramifications of several interested parties suggest we may approach 1997 with optimism, as long as those artists holding the balance of power do not disappear up their own ego.

"All of a sudden last year, kids were buying records again," says Neil Burrow, of Jam X Management. "I don't see why that shouldn't go on in 1997, and beyond." Burrow is the manager of the Bluestones, one of the freshest of last year's harvest of guitar bands, whose debut album, *Expecting to Fly*, sold 300,000 copies.

Burrow believes that no balance sheet or corporate policy can tell the "kids" where to place their money. "Surely if it all comes down to a band being a good band. If that's not right, I shouldn't be doing this job."

If any guitar band will determine the sound of rock this year, it will be Oasis. Their third album, rumoured to be titled *Be Here Now*, is not yet scheduled for release, but its launch will come not a second too soon for the industry and adoring fans alike.

"I'll be very interested to see where Oasis go," says Simon Fowler of Ocean Colour Scene, themselves one of the slimming successes of 1996. "They know how to survive, and do justice to that."

Fowler feels that British rock's positive surge will continue this year, especially since the "Britpop"

■ A lot of people have an awful lot of confidence

see themselves as having to fit in with a certain thing."

Ocean Colour Scene will release a B-sides compilation next month while continuing work on the sequel to *Mosley Shoals*, their breakthrough album which has now gone double platinum, while the Bluestones are demoing songs for their second LP. Meanwhile, the first among the rock elite to be up fresh morsels this year will be Blur, whose self-titled fifth album is released next month. The single *Beethoven*, out on January 20, is a welcome departure from the bare-boy pop of *Country House*, in favour of the more experimental style of Blur's earlier years. They will spend much of the year on the road, with British festival dates planned for the summer and a UK tour due at year's end.

Meanwhile, U2 are due back in early March with *Pop*, their first

label album to be released around the millennium. That was a very easy generic term, but I think it was a hard one to connect with the music," he says. "The situation now allows more creativity. I don't think *Kula Shaker* could have happened two years ago. A lot of people have an awful lot of confidence, because they don't

feel like they're being held back by the music business."

The Chemical Brothers, collaborators with Noel Gallagher on one of 1996's most vital chart-topping singles, *Setting Sun*, are expected, along with the Prodigy, to spearhead dance music's continuing takeover of the mainstream. "It's interesting that two of the biggest rock records of 1996 were dance records," says Simon Sadler, head of music at London dance radio station Kiss 100, of *Setting Sun* and the Prodigy's *Firestarter*. "Although you wonder whether it is strictly dance any more. I think far more indie fans than dance fans bought *Setting Sun*."

Even 12 months ago, it would have been hard to swallow the idea of a record as hard-hitting as *Firestarter*, by a group with as confrontational an image as the Prodigy, reaching into millions of living rooms on *Top of the Pops*. Sadler sees it as a reflection of the power of dance culture to restrain the ears of a large audience. "Jungle music seems to be crossing over now, and we're contemplating introducing the current 'happy hardcore' sound to our daytime listeners. To a lot of them, that will sound as difficult as jungle did three years ago."

Jon Cobby of Tower Records says: "The Prodigy album [due for

release in the next few months] will be enormous. On a par with U2, I imagine." He also predicts that this month will see Bush, those British rockers adored in America but relatively unknown here, finally welcomed home, as their recent American *No 1 Recordblades*, *Statue*, is released on January 20.

Much of the class of '95 will rise again as Radiohead, Black Grape, Supergrass, Elastica, Cast and the Charlatans all return, but it may be some months before tabloid editors can again depend upon Jarvis Cocker on a slow news day, as Pulp's follow-up to *Different Class* is still a work in progress.

Memories and kyanites will be tested by the long-serving James, creators of three Top Three albums

between 1990 and 1995, whose *Whiplash* is released on February 24. Morrissey, licking his wounds and tending to his wallet after his High Court drubbing last month, will be under pressure to arrest a creative and commercial decline with his next album, to be previewed with a single in late March.

Newcomers of whom England expects more than most include Mansun, whose recent Top 15 hit *Wide Open Space* heightened anticipation for their first album *Attack of the Grey Lantern* (out next month). Geneva, labelmates of Bush, will perform with Lou Reed, Robert Smith of the Cure and others. He has even found time to make a record: *Edith*, out next month and reportedly full of jungle and trip-hop influences.

Bowie will not be the only member of the old guard back on duty. Virgin Records speaks in hope rather than expectation of a new Rolling Stones album before year's end; Keith Richards's Jamaican-leaning solo project is likely to emerge first. Simple Minds are completing an album for summer release, and EMI confidently expects 1997 to be a Kate Bush year, which come only slightly more often than total eclipses.

And even those fans of the palaeolithic age of rock will be catered for. Even as I write, work is being completed in Santa Monica on a comeback album by Supertramp, backed by an exhaustive world tour. Can the REO Speedwagon revival be far behind?



Last year the Prodigy crossed over from the clubs to the chart mainstream; this year David Bowie makes his own way into the jungle

And here's the real Spice girls

Canny young Caitlin Moran deals out a winning hand, but saves her trump card of a female band for last

The year 1997 will see no new Oasis — the pop world is too contrary to keep travelling in the same slipstream and, indeed, feeding off the same Beatles and Cream albums. Instead, 1997 will be a year of odd bands: painting smaller pictures; global domination will be given a rest in favour of the spawning of new scenes.

Plus! Words are back. After dance-pared lyrics down to the odd catch-phrase and whoop rock countered with the incomprehensible roar of grunge. Lyrics continued to take a back seat with the rise of Oasis, who combined the minimalism of techno with the passion of grunge to give us regular catch-phrases. The resurgence of lyricism and poetry started with Blur's millennium-hugging city-love, continued with Pulp's wry, eyed filth, gossip, and encouraged the Divine Comedy and Baby Bird along the way.

This year promises a legion of bands who can talk it like they walk it, spinning Dylan words and strumming articulate adenalin in their wake.

Jack, six stringy lotharios do that word-dung gloriously... Of *Lights* has singer Anthony shivering as he watches "the widowed Moll moving through the gangster's bar/As a Jaguar through an orchestra", and despairing with the thought that "all this horror... and just supposing, just imagine if the world wasn't ending?" The music is that sawing, heart-between-your-teeth gasp that Leonard Cohen would be perfecting if



"All Suzy Quatro fronting Elastica — big-booted stomping and plenty of choruses to yell": that's the wonder of Tiger

Carnival in Scotland

Mazurek's interest in Brazilian rhythms lifts this highly enjoyable album out of the ranks of retro-jazz.

Christopher Parker
The Complete Legendary Rockland Palace Concert 1952
Jazz Classics Records CD-JCCL-5014
RECORDED at a benefit gig for the leftist lawyer Benjamin Davis in Sep-

tember 1952, the 31 tracks range from bop classics such as *Ornithology* through blues and ballads to swing staples (a frenetic version of *Lester Leaps In*) and the odd calypso. Parker's jazz quintet, unusually featuring guitarist Mundell Lowe and faultlessly propelled throughout by drummer Max Roach, is joined by a string section, although the poor sound quality renders it almost inaudible at times.

Parker himself, however, leaps and soars from the soupy backing, his tumbling, protean inventiveness and the elegant but piercing cry of his alto instantly recognisable, rendering this recording — issued in more or less complete form for the first time — indispensable to Bird completists.

CHRIS PARKER

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Only one reason need be given for issuing warrant of commitment

Regina v Stockport Justices, Ex parte Conlon
Regina v Newark and Southwell Justices, Ex parte Keenan

Before Lord Justice Staughton and Mr Justice Tucker
Judgment December 18

When issuing a warrant of commitment in respect of an offender over the age of 21, magistrates were only obliged by section 82(6) of the Magistrates Courts Act 1980 to state which one of the conditions in section 82(4) was satisfied. That was the only statutory requirement in relation to adults.

Only if an offender was under 21 were they obliged additionally (i) to give the grounds on which they were satisfied that it was undesirable or impracticable to make a money payment supervision order and (ii) to state in open court the reason for their opinion that no other method of dealing with the offender was appropriate and cause that reason to be specified in the warrant of commitment and to be entered in the register.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held in a reserved judgment dismissing an appeal by Carol Jane Conlon by way of case-stated against the refusal on April 15, 1996, by Stockport Justices to review the issue of commitment warrants in respect of fines imposed but unpaid, and allowing an application by Stella Keenan for judicial review of the action of Newark and Southwell Justices on July 4, 1996, to commit her for failing to pay fines imposed after her conviction of using a television set without a licence.

Mr Ian Wise for the appellant and the applicant.

LORD JUSTICE STAUGHTON said that the two cases, which concerned enforcement procedures for fines, were of considerable importance because apparently there were some hurdles or like in them in the Crown Office list.

It was the task of magistrates to identify defaulters for whom imprisonment was unavoidable and to distinguish them from those where some other measure was appropriate. Nobody could doubt that the task was difficult or that the vast majority of magistrates were diligent and conscientious in the way they discharged it.

Under section 82(4) of the 1980 Act magistrates might not issue a warrant of commitment for a default in paying a fine unless the offender appeared to the court to have sufficient means to pay the sum for which the court was (i) satisfied that the default was due to the offender's willful refusal or culpable neglect, and (ii) the court had considered or tried all other methods of enforcing payment of

the sum and it appeared to the court that they were inappropriate or unsuccessful.

The "other methods" were now listed in section 82(4A) inserted by section 61 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988. They were (i) a direct warrant, (ii) an attendance centre order, for an offender under 21, (iii) a money payment supervision order, (iv) attachment of earnings, (v) enforcement in the High Court or county court. Direct deduction from income support payments was said to be another method of enforcement which ought to be considered.

By section 82(6) magistrates were obliged when issuing a warrant of commitment on the ground that one of the conditions in section 82(4) was satisfied to state that fact, specifying the ground, in the warrant.

That subsection was of critical importance in these two cases which were both concerned with offenders over 21. In such a case it provided the only statutory requirement that the justices give reasons.

In the case of offenders under 21 there were two additional statutory requirements:

(i) That the court should state in the warrant the grounds on which it was satisfied that it was undesirable or impracticable to make a money payment supervision order; see section 82(5) of the 1980 Act as amended by the Criminal Justice Act 1982 and

2. That the court should state in open court the reason for its opinion that no other method of dealing with such an offender was appropriate and cause that reason to be specified in the warrant of commitment and to be entered in the register; see section 82(5A) of the Criminal Justice Act 1982.

In case there had been any misunderstanding of the judgment in *R v Oldham Justices, Ex parte Cowley* [1996] 2 WLR 681, to which the court had referred, His Lordship repeated that neither of those requirements applied to an adult, and therefore to the present cases, where compliance with section 82(6) was enough.

The *Guidance for Sentencers* produced by the Magistrates' Association and the Justice Clerks' Society in some respects went further than the *Cowley* decision.

Thus the enforcement check list had the following requirement:

"Give your reasons for finding that each of the above enforcement actions is now inappropriate or likely to be unsuccessful."

There was also a draft pronouncement which left space for a reason for regarding each of the six other methods of enforcement. Lord Justice Simon Brown in *Cowley* evidently did not regard that as a requirement imposed in the case of an adult by section 82(6).

Mr Justice Tucker agreed.

Solicitors: Clyde Chappell & Botham, Stoke-on-Trent.

Applying Act to supply of future goods

Walker v Simon Dudley Ltd
Before Lord Justice Phillips and Mr Justice Hooper
Judgment December 17

Where a supplier undertook to supply future goods complying with requirements specified by the customer and it was reasonable to infer that the goods were supplied as corresponding to that trade description, section 4(3) of the Trade Descriptions Act 1968 applied so that the supplier was deemed to have applied to the goods at the time of supply the trade description used in the customer's request.

Accordingly, where the trade description proved false at the time of supply, the supplier committed an offence under section 10(6), subject to any defence under section 24.

For the purposes of section 10(6), if a vendor represented to a purchaser, or a prospective purchaser, that unsatisfactory or future goods would meet certain requirements when supplied, those representations continued in force at the time of the supply, provided that that was a reasonable inference to draw in the circumstances.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held, allowing an appeal by the prosecution trading standards officer, David Williams, against the acquitted by Mr Philip Brown, trading standards magistrate sitting at Shrewsbury Magistrates' Court on January 26, 1996, of the defendants, Simon Dudley Ltd, of four informations alleging the unlawful supply of goods to which a false trade description was applied, contrary to section 10(6). The court imposed an absolute discharge for each offence.

On February 15, 1990, the Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service sent to the defendants for tender a specification for the supply of a fire engine. The defendants tendered on the basis of that specification and agreed that the engine would comply with the specification. Their tender was accepted. Prior to delivery the defendants agreed certain modifications at the request of the fire service. The fire engine supplied was not modified as requested and did not meet the specification.

Informations 1, 3 and 4 related to the false trade descriptions arising as a result of the failure to comply with the original specifications. Information 4 related to the failure to carry out the modifications to the fire engine.

The magistrate found that the defendants had failed to implement the modifications which the specification required, and that the fire engine did not comply with the original specifications.

Accordingly, where the trade description did not correspond to the goods supplied, it was reasonable to infer that the goods were false. It mattered not whether the goods or were to be acquired or manufactured at the time of the representations.

There was no requirement in the statute of knowledge. The words "error in the course of supply" in *Cavendish* (at p45) should be construed with caution.

LORD JUSTICE PHILLIPS, concurring, said that section 4(3) only required that the goods should be supplied pursuant to a request in which a trade description was used in circumstances which gave rise to the inference that the goods supplied corresponded to that description.

The test was a simple test of fact and did not depend on whether or when the trade description became a term of the contract. In the case of informations 1, 3 and 4 the fire engine was clearly supplied pursuant to a request in which a trade description was used, the specification coupled with the acceptance of the tender, and the circumstances in which the fire engine were

supplied were equally clearly such as to make it reasonable to infer that the fire engine was supplied as corresponding to the specification. Information 2 was less easy to accommodate within section 4(3). The request for the supply of a fire engine had already been made when the specification for modifications was added to the trade description already specified.

Where, however, the trade description used in the original specification was varied by a subsequent request, and the goods were supplied in circumstances such as to make it reasonable to infer that they corresponded to the description as varied, the person supplying the goods had to be deemed to have applied to the goods the trade description as varied.

The defendant confirmed that the fire engine would comply with the trade description specified by the fire service. It followed that the trade descriptions applied to the fire engine at the moment of supply. The description was false. For that reason also they should have been convicted.

Offences under the 1968 Act would be committed on many occasions where a breach occurred of a contract for the sale of goods. That was not a satisfactory state of affairs, but it might be justified by the need to ensure fair trading in a wide variety of circumstances.

The consequence was, however, that technical offences would be committed where a civil law claim was the only remedy required. Trading standards officers had to exercise discretion when deciding whether or not a particular case warranted the intervention of the criminal law.

The magistrate did not consider that the case warranted a prosecution and neither did His Lordship. The case did not fall within the type of mischief against which the 1968 Act was directed.

Solicitors: Lanyon Bowler, Shrewsbury, Wragge & Co, Birmingham.

When plaintiff cannot accept payment into court

Braben v Emap Images Ltd
Before Mr John Cherryman, QC
Judgment December 13

A plaintiff who elected an account of profits rather than damages could not accept, under Order 22, rule 3 of the Rules of the Supreme Court, a payment into court, made under Order 22, rule 10, which authorised payment in respect of claims for debt or damages, in satisfaction of his claim notwithstanding that the payment in sum was expressed to be made "in satisfaction of all the causes of action of the plaintiff in respect of which the plaintiff claims".

Further, as the claim for damages no longer subsisted after the election for an account of profits had been made, the court could not order a payment out of the money remaining in court under Order 22, rule 5.

Mr John Cherryman, QC, sitting as a deputy High Court judge, so held in a reserved judgment in the Chancery Division on a motion for an account of profits instead.

By its defence, Emap admitted the infringement, offered an undertaking not to infringe further and offered to submit to judgment for an injunction, an order for delivery up and an inquiry as to all the causes of action in respect of which the plaintiff claims.

The plaintiff elected to take an account of profits rather than the claim to damages, but was willing to accept the money in court in satisfaction of its claim. The plaintiff then sought leave under Order 22, rule 5 to withdraw the payment into court out of time.

The plaintiff had failed to accept the payment in within 21 days pursuant to Order 22, rule 5 but argued that the court should exercise the discretion conferred by rule 5 to order payment out to it.

The plaintiff was held to be in default of accepting the payment in within 21 days pursuant to rule 5 but argued that the court should exercise the discretion conferred by rule 5 to order payment out to it.

It was true that as in this case, a payment in was often expressed to be made in satisfaction of all causes of action when other items of relief as well as a debt or damages were claimed. However, paragraph 5 of rule 1 did enable

the plaintiff to apply to the court if he was "embarrassed by the payment".

Order 22, rule 3 in authorising the plaintiff to accept a payment in within 21 days provided: "... the plaintiff may: (a) where the money was paid in respect of the cause of action or all the causes of action in respect of which he claims, accept the money in satisfaction of that cause of action or those causes of action as the case may be..."

In his Lordship's view, rule 3 only authorised acceptance in respect of a cause or causes of action in which a debt or damages was due.

Order 22, rule 5 provided: "(i) if any money paid into court in an action is not accepted in accordance with rule 3, the money remaining in court shall not be paid out except in pursuance of an order of the court which may be made at any time before, or after the trial or hearing of the action, and where such an order is made before the trial or hearing the money shall not be paid out except in satisfaction of the cause or causes of action in respect of which it was paid in."

In his Lordship's judgment, the concluding words precluded any payment out where the cause of action for a debt or damages in respect of which the money was paid in was no longer subsisting when the application for payment out was made.

That was the case here. The application was made before the trial or hearing of the action and the claim for damages disappeared when the plaintiff elected to take an account of profits instead.

It was not necessary that the vehicle was solely ready for such use. All that was necessary was that it was available for use in an emergency.

His Lordship said that the defendant could not be read completely. Merely because any vehicle being used, whether it was not being "held", the plaintiff was descriptive of the type of vehicle which might broadly be termed an emergency vehicle.

That definition was now enacted in paragraph 26 of Schedule 3, Part 1 to the Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Regulations (SI 1993 No 265).

It provided exemption for "a vehicle held ready for use in an emergency by an undertaking for the supply of water, gas, electricity or fuel".

The company argued that although the vehicle was not attending an emergency, it was ready so

protected, if the court decided that was the proper course to take, by the court not remitting the case to the justices.

In the present case, the justices had found that the company's vehicle was exempt from the need to obtain an operator's licence for its use as an emergency vehicle because it fell within the definition in paragraph 27 of Schedule 3, Part 1 to the Goods Vehicles (Operators' Licences, Qualifications and Fees) Regulations (SI 1993 No 176).

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His Lordship said that the defendant could not be read completely. Merely because any vehicle being used, whether it was not being "held", the plaintiff was descriptive of the type of vehicle which might broadly be termed an emergency vehicle.

Even if the vehicle was ready for use in an emergency the owners had to be an undertaking for the supply of relevant services. The company was not.

Lord Justice McCowan agreed.

Solicitors: Walker Tomaszewski, Camden Town; Greenwoods, Peterborough.

Licence exemption for emergency vehicles

Wing v T. D. & C. Kelly Ltd
Before Lord Justice McCowan and Mr Justice Collins
Judgment December 21

Owners of a vehicle kept for use in an emergency were exempt from the need to obtain an operator's licence only if they were a business for the supply of water, gas, electricity or telephone services.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held when allowing an appeal by Emap Wragge on behalf of the *Crime (Sentences) Bill*, now in the process of becoming law, which authorised payment in respect of claims for debt or damages, in satisfaction of his claim notwithstanding that the payment in sum was expressed to be made "in satisfaction of all the causes of action of the plaintiff in respect of which the plaintiff claims".

The plaintiff had failed to accept the payment in within 21 days pursuant to Order 22, rule 5 but argued that the court should exercise the discretion conferred by rule 5 to order payment out to it.

It was true that as in this case, a payment in was often expressed to be made in satisfaction of all causes of action when other items of relief as well as a debt or damages were claimed. However, paragraph 5 of rule 1 did enable

the plaintiff to apply to the court if he was "embarrassed by the payment".

On May 29 all those individuals, the clients, met Mr Peter A. Rowe at that time the conveyancing and commercial partner of the solicitors.

Mr Rowe, giving evidence, had said he had next to no knowledge of tax law and was quite unqualified to give any warning as to the existence of any adverse tax consequences of any transaction, save on the simplest sale of residential property.

It was common ground that the clients asked Mr Rowe to act for them on the transaction as outlined and he agreed to do so.

The solicitors had contended that

(a) Mr Staples had informed Mr Rowe that the clients would be structured as a company for the transaction, and that being a company, the clients would be liable for corporation tax.

(b) Mr Staples had informed Mr Rowe that the clients would be liable for VAT on the transaction, and that being a company, the clients would be liable for VAT on the transaction.

There had been no justification for Mr Rowe either assuming that the clients would be seeking any tax advice from elsewhere, or believing they had any relevant expertise.

Therefore, he was under a duty to advise Hurlingham how the transaction should be structured and, in particular, that the structure in fact adopted would expose it to a tax charge which, by common consent, could be avoided by merely formal alterations.

Solicitors: Ernest H. Godson & Co, Shiford, Darlow & Gilbert.

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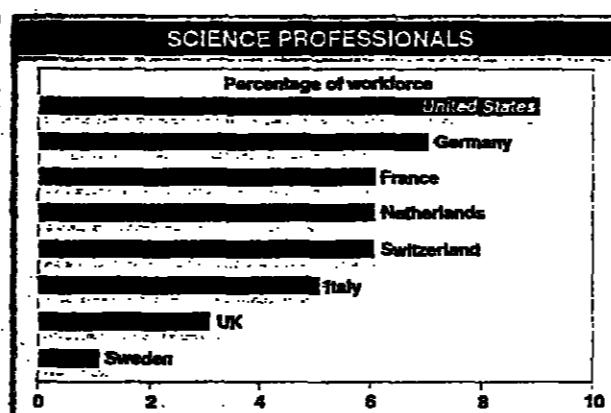
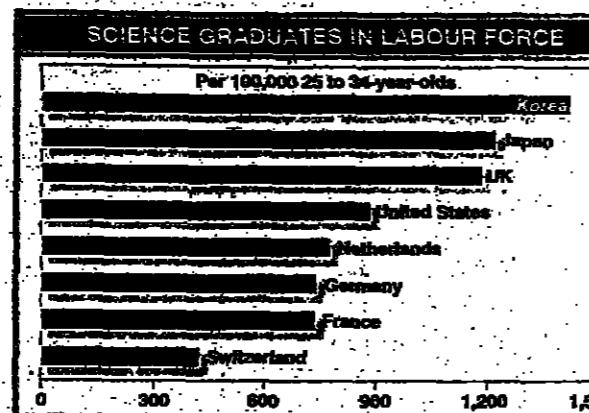
FOR TELEPHONE

A scientific mystery

John O'Leary
puts science
teaching and
jobs under the
microscope



Britain produces a lot of science graduates but a comparatively small number take up jobs in the field



Britain's need for more scientists and engineers has been one of the few areas of agreement in education policy over the past decade and more. The unsolved problem has been how to entice more teenagers away from the arts. Yesterday's conference in Birmingham of the Association for Science Education was an unexpected place to find the premise being questioned. Professor Alan Smithers, the head of Brunel University's Centre for Education and Employment Research, argued that there is no shortage in relation to the current jobs market.

He was not saying that the population has all the scientific education it needs, or that there is no scope for improvement in research. But his analysis suggested that quality is a bigger problem than quantity and that fundamental changes are needed if levels of scientific literacy are to rise.

The nub of his argument is that politicians and educationists have been addressing the wrong question on science education. Attention has focused on filling places on degree courses in an expanded university system and steering students towards "useful" scientific and technological subjects, rather than the arts and social sciences. At the same time, spending on research and development has been dropping in real terms, restricting job opportunities in the sciences. The combined result has been a surfeit of poorly qualified graduates and not enough attention to important issues in the school curriculum.

Though more teenagers are taking science GCSEs and the numbers staying on for A level have soared, the proportion specialising in sciences in the sixth form has moved in the opposite direction. Mixing sci-

ence and arts A levels has become much more common, but only one in five who does so takes science or engineering at university.

Professor Smithers believes that poor science teaching may be partly responsible. More than a third of those taking postgraduate teaching qualifications in mathematics, physics and chemistry have at best a third-class degree. Only at the height of the recession did universities and colleges meet the Government's targets for recruitment in these subjects.

Another factor, he argues, is the disjunction between GCSE and A level. With the separate sciences at GCSE now the virtual preserve of grammar schools and the independent sector, most youngsters taking science in science and engineering lagging behind those in most professions, young people are

likely to put off the subjects by the career prospects.

No European country can match the British proportion of science graduates in the labour force, but the proportion working as scientists is twice as high in Germany, France, Switzerland and The Netherlands. Professor Smithers sees the explanation for this apparent paradox: Britain's relatively low spending on research and development.

Professor Smithers believes that in the absence of a change of spending priorities, more attention should be given to the quality of education in science and engineering. This may mean more selectivity and some empty university places, as well as

school reforms. He said: "Attempts have been made to expand science-based higher education in the past decade beyond the capacity of A levels and other qualifications to provide. That has involved sucking in students from all directions. Since degree courses have generally remained three years in length, this does call quality into question."

The challenge for ministers is to strike the best balance between scientific literacy and producing the best engineers and research scientists. Professor Smithers' favoured course is to move to five A levels, ensuring that more teenagers keep their options open and receive a more rounded education.

Oxford selection: logic or lottery?

Michael Beloff
describes how his college chooses its new students



Trinity: "a fair entry system"

their equivalents at Warwick for decades.

But there are necessary limits to this process of adjustments. Disparate standards of education in British secondary schools mean that some, however bright, would not catch up, still less overtake, their more intensively educated contemporaries within the span of an Oxford degree course. And it is not our policy to try to redress that imbalance by positive discrimination to the detriment of standards; still less to experiment in social engineering.

I have no doubt that my college is seeking those with the capacity to profit most from their degree course. Achievement to date may indicate potential for the future, but it is not the sole indicator. Colleges do not penalise applicants from top public schools; however, they do sensibly make allowances for strong candidates who have had less opportunity to develop their intelligence to the full. Precisely that kind of adjustment has been made by those awarding Queen's scholarships at Eton and

all a minimum of 2 As and a B; there is a safeguard against overoptimistic assessment, although errors of judgment are inevitable made. As I wrote in our annual report: "This college seeks to maintain an admissions system based on merit, which is sensitive but fair, displaying neither prejudice nor partisanship. We are as happy when the Trinity spirit cascades down from generation to generation in a single family as when the college is given the chance to influence a fresher from a school or country, with which it has no previous connection."

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• The author is President of Trinity College, Oxford.

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Mel Webb on the enduring appeal of a game that has survived an acrimonious split

Darts keeps to popular flight path in Purfleet

It is not pretty. There is fury and acrimonious claim and counter-claim. One side is utterly convinced that right is on its side, the other counters its opponents' statements with scorn and derision. There are tales of intrigue in smoke-filled rooms, of bitter internecine conflict. The world the opposing factions inhabit is riven with something close to all-out war. Ugly stuff.

So what is it that is so split asunder, so angrily divided? Could it be an alliance between two great political parties that has gone sadly wrong? And if it has a place on the sports pages, is it a battle for supremacy in the halls of the Olympic movement, or, perhaps, a division among the governing bodies of world football? Something that really matters to countless millions of people and is so split that there seems no possibility of rapprochement?

Darts. Yes, darts, the bar-room game that can be played wherever there is a 13½ in circular board, three small arrows a side, and a humble nail from which to suspend the target. It is beloved of millions, fleshes out drinking time every week for three million regular players in the United Kingdom and seems an innocent sort of activity, if one that sometimes struggles in its claim that it is a fully-fledged sport.

Sometime in the comparatively recent past somebody decided that darts was to become a professional game, opening the floodgates to the pursuit of the ignoble quid. It became a huge spectator and television attraction in the Eighties, and won one of its leading practitioners, Eric Bristow, a lot of cash and an MBE. Bristow's going gave the game a spurious sort of respectability; there was Eric, the Crafty Cockney himself, alongside worthy district nurses, long-serving constabulary and veteran lollipop ladies.

The game gained television time and entered its golden age, its leading players the likes of Bristow, Jocky Wilson, John Lowe and Bob Anderson. These were the men who, their opponents allege, were protecting their fading pre-eminence by putting themselves in the vanguard of the great division in the game in 1993. At the heart of the split was the loss of television coverage. It would not do, the big names said: the lifeblood of darts was time on the box.

The outcome was two world



Taylor, "who might be the best player ever to hurl an arrow", on the oche at the Circus Tavern in Purfleet yesterday. Photograph: Hugh Routledge

bodies — the British Darts Organisation and, by extension, the World Darts Federation, which stages the Embassy world championship that starts tomorrow in Surrey, and the breakaway World Darts Council (WDC). Bristow, Wilson and the rest nailed their colours to the mast of the WDC, which is holding its version of the world championship this week at the Circus Tavern in Purfleet, in Essex.

One thing to be said for the WDC is that it knows how to put on a show. Even in the group matches, which have been held during the week with the purpose of arriving at eight quarter-finalists, there is more

'There is a capacity audience that joins together in daily obeisance to St Castlemaine, the patron saint of lager'

dry ice than in a dozen Cliff Richard concerts, there are scantily-clad young women bearing national flags, there is a capacity audience that joins together in daily obeisance to St Castlemaine, the patron saint of lager. And then there are the players.

These are no ordinary people.

Among them are beer bellies of

heroic proportions, testimony to a

lifelong pursuit of "one hundred and eighty" and its obligatory amber lubrication. They throw with uncanny and metronomic accuracy and have the subtraction skills of a computer, garbed in spangly shirts that make them resemble dancers who failed the audition for the passable section of *Come Dancing*, sporting Barbara Cartlands with attitude. They might look slightly

daft, but they most assuredly know their business.

The first prize of £45,000 is no trifling matter, and when the eight chosen men go to the oche before the Sky Sports cameras in the knockout stages today, the joint-favourite will be Phil Taylor, who might be the best player ever to hurl an arrow.

Taylor, the second seed and

defending champion, has won two

Embassy titles and two WDC crowns, and is aiming to emulate Bristow's five world titles this weekend. He and Dennis Priestley, the top seed, are the men to beat.

At the end of it all, there will be a winner, who will claim he is the real champion of the world. Meanwhile, down at Frimley Green, the rest will be claiming the same thing. Who knows who is right? Further, is darts a sport or merely an agreeable pastime that outgrew itself? There is no doubt about it. Unequivocally, it is a sport — if it is good enough for the Queen and her Honourable List, then it should be quite good enough for the rest of us.

SAILING: CREWS UNSCATCHED DESPITE BATTERING BY HURRICANE

Tailenders home in tight finish

By EDWARD GORMAN
SAILING CORRESPONDENT

THREE more yachts in the BT Global Challenge reached Wellington, New Zealand yesterday after some very close racing at the back of the fleet and after surviving one of the worst storms of the leg when they were caught by the tail of Hurricane Fergus.

The first of the trio to reach Lambton Harbour was *3Com*, skippered by David Tomkinson, which finished half an hour ahead of the disabled crew on *Time & Tide*, who were followed closely, in turn, by *Courtaulds International*, skippered by Boris Webber in twelfth place for the leg.

Only the dismasted *Concert* and

Heath Insured II, which almost lost her mast, remain at sea. They are expected tomorrow. Hurricane Fergus caused no damage to the tall enders but produced some vicious winds and steep seas.

Ocean Rover, which finished early in the morning on New Year's Day in ninth place after nearly 42 days at sea, experienced the full force of it. Robert Bruce, a crew member, said: "In the Southern Ocean you know that a storm will last nine hours, but this one went on for 15. Instead of the waves being as large as three-storey buildings, Fergus produced skyscrapers which were so deep and steep. The seascape was officially 'phenomenal' with waves 14 metres high."

In the Vendée Globe, Eric

Dumont, of France, who broke his mast on Wednesday while several hundred miles south of Hobart, is still engaged in a struggle with the effects of the magnetic south pole. Because he has no gyro-compass on *Café Legal Le Gout*, his auto-pilots are unusable.

"My pilots haven't worked for three days," an exhausted and desperate Dumont reported from sixth place, about 2,700 miles behind the race leader, Christophe Auguin, also of France, on *Geodis*. "My controls are giving a position which changes every second. It is too much — I have to stop the boat to sleep or work and I am completely exhausted."

Latest positions, page 40

WEIGHTLIFTING: OLYMPIC CHAMPION CALLS HALT TO GLITTERING CAREER

Suleymanoglu bows to heavy load

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

THE weight of years and the demands of training became too much for Naim Suleymanoglu, of Turkey, yesterday when he announced that he is to retire from competitive weightlifting. Suleymanoglu, a native Bulgarian, captured the hearts of his adopted homeland by winning three Olympic gold medals during a glittering career at the top of his sport.

"I am now 30. It is enough. I am announcing that I am putting an end to my active sports life," he told the *Milliyet* newspaper in Ankara.

Suleymanoglu became a national hero after winning his first Olympic gold medal at the Games in Seoul in 1988.

He has also won seven world championships, including two before he defeated from Bulgaria in 1986. At the Olympics in Atlanta last year, Suleymanoglu, who is only 4ft 11in tall, broke his own world record with a combined lift of 738lb in snatch and clean and jerk.

"Weightlifting has given me a lot, and it has given me a lot of joy," Suleymanoglu, who has beennicknamed the Pocket Hercules, said.

"My next target would have been the Sydney Games. But I cannot remain in active weightlifting for four more years," he explained.

Suleymanoglu said that he wanted to continue working in weightlifting as a technical director or manager.

"But for now I only have one goal: to rest for a long while and catch up on all that I have missed out on in my youth," he said.

Born into an ethnic Turkish family, he was universally honoured and praised for helping to raise the profile of Turkish sport.

When he returned home from leading championships, he would be carried on the shoulders of supporters who had gathered in their thousands.

Crowds of followers would also accompany him to championships to cheer him on, singing national songs and waving Turkish flags.

He has been elected "sports personality of the year" in Turkey for six years in succession by readers of *Milliyet*.

IN BRIEF

Muster put off by ringing in his ears

THOMAS MUSTER, the top seed, angered by spectators using their mobile phones, dropped a set and took more than two hours to beat Christian Ruud, of Norway, 6-2 3-6, 7-5 for a place in the quarter-finals of the Qatar Open tennis tournament in Doha yesterday.

Muster cruised through the first set in 32 minutes but his game went to pieces in the second, when he became increasingly disgruntled by line calls and the constant ringing of telephones. At one stage, the Austrian screamed at a spectator: "Turn off your phone or get the hell out of here."

In today's quarter-finals, Muster meets Jim Courier, Sergi Bruguera takes on Petra Korda, Tim Henman, of Britain, comes up against the Swede, Magnus Gustafsson, and another Swedish player, Magnus Larsson, plays Hicham Arazi, of Morocco.

Collins defence

Boxing: Steve Collins will have a rare continental opponent when he makes the sixth defence of his WBO super-middleweight title next month. Frederic Seiller, of France, will be his opponent at the 12,000-capacity London Arena on February 8.

His six previous WBO championship fights have been against British boxers — Chris Eubank and Nigel Benn (both twice), Cornelius Carr and Neville Brown.

The Collins-Seiller bout will be one of four world championships on Frank Warren's promotion, one of the others being between the WBO featherweight title-holder, Prince Naseem, and the IBF champion, Tom Johnson.

Back on road

Cycling: The former world champion Lance Armstrong, of the United States, who is fighting to overcome cancer, has resumed training, the manager of his French team, Alain Bondue, said yesterday.

"He finished his chemotherapy on December 13 and had a good rest afterwards," Bondue said. "His morale is excellent and he hopes to return to international competition in May."

Armstrong, who won the world road race title in 1993 when he was 21, revealed last October that he had cancer of the abdomen and testicles.

Honours board

Basketball: Joe Whelton, of Manchester Giants, has been named Budweiser coach of the month for December. Whelton, who was coach of the year during his first spell with the Giants 13 years ago, took the prize after guiding his team to four victories last month.

The London Towers guard, Danny Lewis, has won the December player-of-the-month award.

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Monsanto Plc
Morsecure Ltd
Morgante Thermal Ceramics Ltd
Money Group Ltd

Newbury City Ltd
 New MacDonald
 Nufar International Ltd
 Nufar Re Life Services Ltd
 N2 Selection Ltd
 N.C.M.
 N.H.S. Nurses
 N.I.C.S. Sport Association
 N.I.G. Timber Ltd
 N.I.S. UK
 N.I.W. Bank Plc
 Nipper & Sarsley Winter
 Nitroline Mortgage Services
 Nitroline
 Nobana Farmers Union, Hunts & Banks
 Nobex, M. Ltd.
 Nobex Westminster Bank
 Nobex, Westminster Plc
 Nobex Building Society
 Nobexham Enterprises Ltd
 Nobex, Eastwell
 Nobex Oil Ltd
 Nobex & Finsen
 Nobex Investor Partners Ltd
 Nobexians of Canterbury BMW
 Nobex Plc
 Nobson, Graham & Jones Solicitors
 Nobson Motor (GE) Ltd
 Nobson Power Ltd
 Nodex
 North East Water Plc
 North West Acid Tester Ltd
 Northern Electric
 Northern Friends V.A.R.M.S.
 Nottingham Water Holdings Ltd
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 Nuclear Electric Ltd
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 O'Leary Family
 Ode UK Ltd
 Oceanacoustics (UK) Ltd
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 One 2 One
 One Electronics (UK) Ltd
 Onechip Tech
 One-UK SAP
 Onean Engineering Services Limited
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 Overbury Plc
 Oveyz Stationery
 Oyster Terminal's Ltd
 P A Business Systems Ltd
 PCPSL Limited
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 Singer & Friedlander (Isc of Man) Ltd
 Sisec Security Products Ltd
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 Societe Generale
 Software Personnel Plc
 Sonitrol
 Southern Cross
 Specim Systems Ltd
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 Star Machines UK Ltd
 Stelco Plant Protection
 Stewart & Stevenson (UK) Ltd
 Stokes Jones
 Strategic Asset Management Solutions
 Style Life Windows
 Summers & Partners
 Sun Alliance - Personal Lines Division
 Sun Electric UK Limited
 Sunbelt Bankers
 Sydne Chamber of Commerce
 Swan National Leasing Limited
 Syles International Limited
 Systems Union Ltd
 T S B Bank Plc
 T.G. Armstrong & Partners
 TDK (UK) Ltd Components Division
 TMD Carat
 TMG Financial Products
 TNT Express Worldwide
 Tatkans International
 Tamakus Plc
 Tankreight
 Taylor Joynson Garrett
 Taylor Nelson ACB
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 Terra Laval
 Thames Water Plc
 Thames Water Contracting Plc
 The Antony Gibbs Consulting Group
 The Boughroon Group
 The British Land Company Plc
 The Brush Precast Concrete Federation
 The Cable Corporation
 The Change Partnership Ltd
 The Chase Manhattan Corporation
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RUGBY UNION: THOMAS RETAINS PLACE AT STAND-OFF HALF

Wales restore Quinnell but overlook Davies

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

AS ONE rugby league prodigal returns, another departs from the Wales team which will play the United States in Cardiff next Saturday. Scott Quinnell will play in the back row for the first time since 1994, but there is no restoration for Jonathan Davies, who must be content with a place in the 38-strong squad named for the five nations' championship.

Quinnell's return for Wales, once he had thrown in his lot as a professional rugby union player with Richmond rather than a rugby league player with Wigan, was largely a matter of money. Those players plying their trade outside Wales operate on a different contractual basis which Mike Burton, Quinnell's manager, deemed to be unfair.

Any shordtall has been overcome by the generosity of Geoff Cartwright, of the Reebok company, the main sponsors to the Welsh Rugby Union, so, having missed the four pre-Christmas internationals, Quinnell can win his tenth cap. He is one of three changes, one positional, from the XV beaten 37-20 by South

Africa last month. His selection at No 8 pushes Steve Williams to blind-side flanker, where he replaces the injured Dale McIntosh, while Gareth Thomas returns to the wing at the expense of Dafydd James. There remains the anomaly at stand-off half, where Arwel Thomas is retained ahead of Davies.

If it were merely a matter of age this would not be a problem, for Thomas deserves the encouragement and whatever international experience he can acquire. But the argument for restoring Davies against Australia last month was that his tactical capability

would bring the best out of the side as a whole; he would have played against South Africa but for an attack of influenza and Thomas did not enjoy the most comfortable of matches.

"Jonathan, along with Arwel and Neil Jenkins, was considered, but it was felt that Arwel deserved another chance," Kevin Bowring, the Wales coach, said yesterday. "We feel he provides the spark for our back division, though there is certainly a lack of consistency in his game. A lot of our good work over the last year or so has been when Arwel played at outside half and we want to move ahead

"with the style of game we played against South Africa."

The option of change before Wales play Scotland in Edinburgh on January 18 remains, of course, but Bowring admitted that he would "probably" have chosen the same XV had the Scots been the opponents next week. "Neil was excellent playing stand-off for Pontypridd [against Cardiff] last week but when we decided on Arwel, there was no hesitation in having him as full back," the coach added.

"Jonathan has loads of experience and that experience will" rub off on the others, but we felt Arwel was the man for this occasion."

The involvement of Davies with the extended squad will prove valuable in two ways, if Davies pursues his coaching ambitions after concluding probably this summer his playing career.

Quinnell, 24, made his international debut in the 26-24 defeat by Canada at Cardiff in 1993. "I feel as though I'm winning my first cap again, though I hope it's not as big a nightmare as the last time," he said. "I'm just glad that all the arguing is over and that I can pull on the red jersey once again. I don't have to prove anything to anyone, apart from the coach."

Bowring acknowledged the physical presence Quinnell, at 6ft 4in and 19st, will bring to the team and is comfortable with the versatility of Williams, who has played in all three back-row positions, as well as at lock. Colin Charvis stays on the open-side flank, though the prompt selection of Gwyn Jones among the replacements, after only one senior appearance for Cardiff this season, will serve as a considerable spur.

But if any Richmond player has forced a way back into the national side it is Alun Bateman, an increasingly authoritative figure at centre, where his partnership with Scott Gibbs leaves no room for Gareth Thomas to resume. Hence the removal of the Bridgend player to the wing ahead of James, his club colleague. Gareth Thomas was omitted from the South Africa match because of a mouth injury but his consistent form this season demanded a recall.

Cardiff will take an entire international XV into the other semi-final, against Brive on Sunday. Two of the changes from the team that beat Bath in the quarter-finals are in the back row, where Emry Lewis and Gwyn Jones resume after injury.

For all his efforts against Harlequins last weekend, two tries scored and a third created — Rory Underwood

remains among the Leicester replacements for their Heineken Cup semi-final against Toulouse, the holders, at Welford Road tomorrow. Leon Lloyd, preferred to Un-

derwood for the past two months before being switched to centre at Harlequins, keeps his place on the left wing.

Rob Liley and Stuart Potter return to the back division and John Wells, who has had a strained shoulder, is named at blind-side flanker though Leicester will not confirm his place until tomorrow.

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CARDIFF (v Brive): J Thomas, S Haf, M Hall, L. Davies, N. Walker, J. Davies, R. Howley, A. Llewellyn, M. Williams, G. Williams, N. Williams, D. Jones, G. Jones, E. Lewis, Replacements: J. Hawkins, L. Jones, P. Young, P. Booth, K. Stewart, J. Ringer, G. Jones

Obituary, page 21

Irish get frosty response

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE AND DAVID HANDS

AS IF the weather was not bad enough, London Irish compounded the fixture chaos by exercising their right to have their Courage Clubs Championship first division match at Orrell tomorrow postponed as a result of international call-ups by Ireland.

The move, sanctioned by the Rugby Football Union (RFU), met with condemnation from Orrell, who immediately consulted their legal advisers. They are due to consult the RFU competitions sub-committee today. However, as International Rugby Football Board regulations state that when players are required by both their clubs and countries preference is given to the latter, no change is likely.

What angered Orrell was that London Irish have known since Monday about the selection by Ireland of Conor O'Shea, Gabriel Fulcher, Jeremy Davidson

and David Humphreys as a replacement for the match against Italy at Lansdowne Road tomorrow, yet they only learnt of the postponement request on television yesterday.

The backlog caused by the freeze is bound to be extended. Richmond have postponed their match against Bedford next Saturday because they have three players in the Wales squad against the United States and there will be further clashes of interest on January 18, when a full league programme in England has been scheduled for the first weekend of the five nations' championship.

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Obituary, page 21

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

The next few Refreshers will deal with the subject of bidding and making slams, a source of many lost points at both the rubber and duplicate bridge table. What do you need to succeed in making a slam? Two things:

1. Enough strength, so that you can make 12 tricks (small slam) or 13 tricks (grand slam);

2. Enough controls, so that you do not have more top losers than you can afford. Thus in a small slam you should not have two top losers, and in a grand slam you need first-round control (ace, or void in a suit contract) of every suit.

I think the best way to explain these points is by way of examples. To find out about controls, the partnership uses cue-bids. After the partnership has agreed a suit and is committed to game, a bid in a new suit guarantees first- or occasionally second-round control and is a slam try.

♦T632	♦V44	♦T53	♦AQ3
♦K	N	W	E
♦Q972	♦J109	♦8653	♦J662
♦1094	♦J862	♦82	
♦J10765	♦AQ0854	♦J10	
North	South		
1 NT	3 S		
4 C	4 D		
4 H	6 S		

South's response to the 12-14 INT opening is a forcing Three Spades. What do you make of Four Clubs? North won't play in clubs — with no spade support he would just rebid 3NT. Hence logically Four Clubs (known as an "advance cue-bid") shows a near-maximum INT opening, with spade support and club control. If all South did after that was to bid Four Spades North would pass — he has described his hand.

South can now see that the combined strength is in the 32-33 point range, with a spade fit in addition. He is interested in a slam but is worried that there may be two top hearts to lose, so he responds by cue-bidding Four Diamonds. When North shows a heart control by bidding Four Hearts, South confidently jumps to slam. I leave you to work out the safety play in the trump suit.

□ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

BARD PARTS
HERMIONE
a. Hamlet's sister
b. A midsummer lover
c. Queen of Sicily
SATURNINUS
a. Friend of Timon
b. A feeble Emperor
c. A conspirator

FLAVIUS
a. A Senator
b. A lookalike
c. A faithful steward
PHILOSTRATE
a. An MC
b. A lover
c. A miserly father

Answers on page 42

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE

CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Nunn leads

Grandmaster John Nunn has moved into the sole lead at Hastings by defeating Xie Jun of China. Nunn was somewhat fortunate in that, having offered a draw on the 28th move, which Black refused, that he was able to go on to win. All remaining games were drawn, which leaves the leading scores as: Nunn 4½; Hebdon and Rosenthal 3½; Lalic and Movsesian 3; Conquest and Xie Jun 2½.

White: John Nunn

Black: Xie Jun

Hastings, January 1997

Ray Lopez

1 e4 e5

2 Nf3 Nc6

3 Bb5 a6

4 Bb4 Nf6

5 d4 Be7

6 Re1 b5

7 Bg3 d5

8 e5 Nc5

9 Bf4 Nf6

10 Bg3 Nc5

11 Nbd2 h6

12 d4 c6

13 d5 c4

14 Nf1 Nbd7

15 Ng3 Nc5

16 h3 g5

17 Nf3 g4

18 Nxd4 Nc5

19 Nc6 Nc5

20 Sb1 Nc5

21 Rd3 Nc5

22 Sd3 Qb6

23 Kf1 e4

24 Bf4 Nc5

25 Qd3 Qc2

26 Qd2 Qc2

27 Sd2 Rf8

28 Nf3 Bg5

29 Rf1 Re7

30 Rf2 Re8

31 c4 Nc5

32 c5 Nc5

33 Qd5 Nc5

34 Bg3 Re8+

35 Rf1 Re8+

36 Rf2 Re8+

37 Bg1 Bf5

38 Rf3 Re8

39 Rf2 Re8

40 Rf3 Re8

41 c7 Rf6

42 Bf2 Rf6

43 Kf2 Rf6

44 Kf1 Rf6

45 Kf2 Rf6

46 Kf1 Rf6

47 Kf2 Rf6

48 Kf1 Rf6

49 Kf2 Rf6

50 Kf1 Rf6

51 Rb3 Kf7

52 Kf6 Kf7

53 Kf7 Kf7

54 Kf6 Kf7

55 Kf7 Kf7

RACING: ALL-WEATHER PROVIDES HUNGRY PUNTERS WITH STAPLE DIET AS FREEZE BITES DEEP

Lingfield sand offers welcome oasis

By JULIAN MUSCAT

AFFLUENT owners ignore it, successful jockeys avoid it and tradition-bound trainers condemn it. But the nation's punters have adopted it like the Prodigal Son. Nothing divides the racing audience quite like an afternoon on the all-weather.

In the same context, nothing better illustrates the conundrum that has befallen the sport since High Street betting was legalised 35 years ago. As professionals of influence recoil at horses churning up sand, those whose betting habits finance the sport cannot wait to grapple with the form. It may not be racing at its best, but it satisfies the hundreds of thousands who savour their daily flutter.

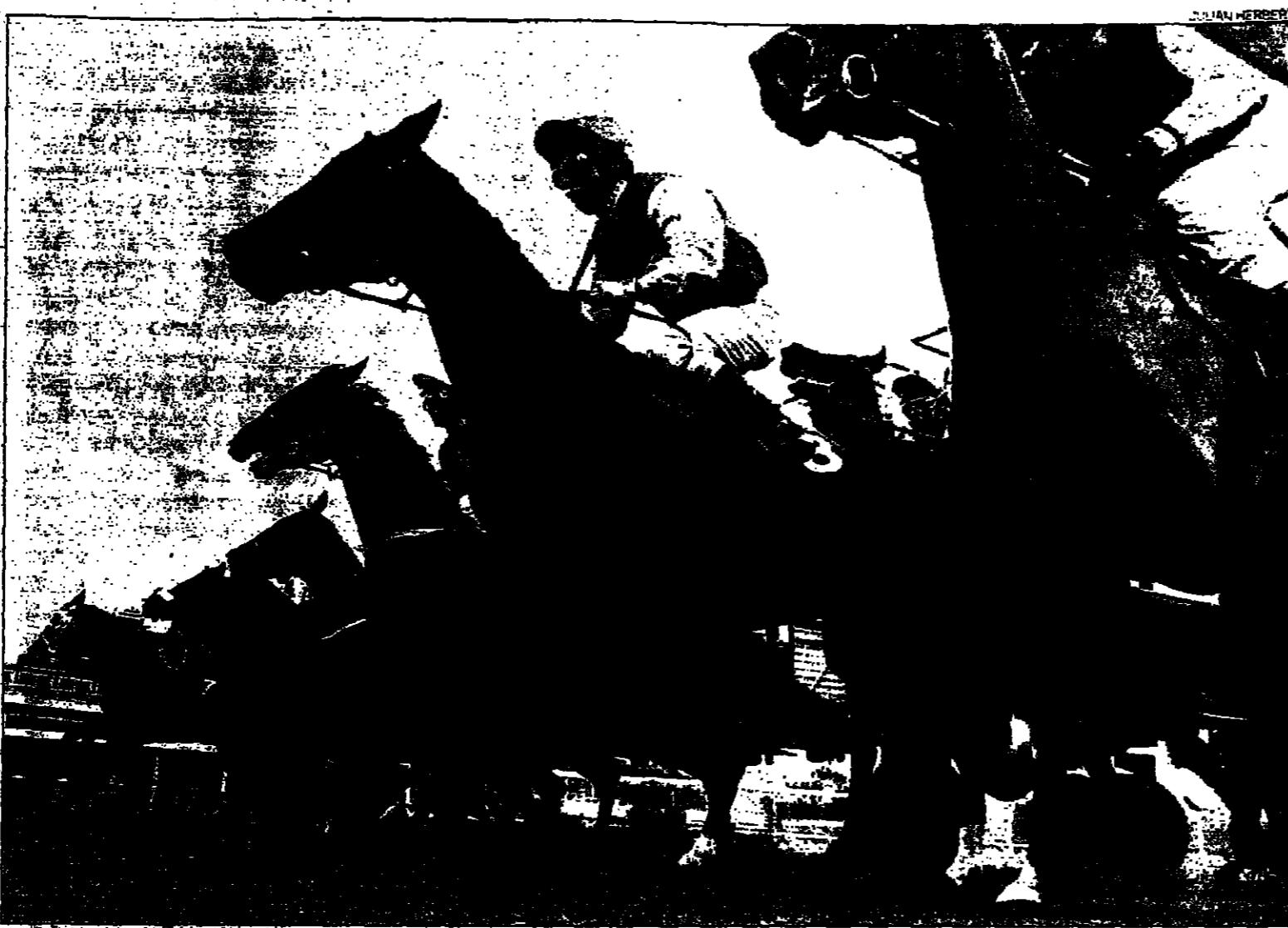
MICHAEL COOPER

Map: DOMINO FLYER
(3.0 Southwell)
Next best: Stoutrouge
(2.30 Southwell)

Of course, you won't find purists complaining when all-weather revenues are distributed. In their eyes it is racing's brother: they are glad of the revenue but wish to confine it to the seedy sidestreets. Quite how they will react to Channel 4's live "coverage" from Lingfield tomorrow is anyone's guess.

Certainly, it was hard to appreciate the code's importance from a visit to Lingfield yesterday. In bitterly cold conditions, the stands were deserted until just before each contest, when hardcore punters emerged from the sanctum of the bar. It was hard to believe that these brief exchanges with 20 on-course bookmakers would effectively determine the odds at which millions would change hands around the country.

These were deeply committed punters to whom the vagaries of climate and ground had long ceased to matter. As Joe Bates, a regular bookmaker at Lingfield, put it:



The runners and riders start out for the Bad Penny Maiden Stakes on the harrowed Equitrac at snowy Lingfield yesterday

"The form stands up very well. The surface is usually standard, and races are never slow-run, so you get very few meaningless results. Sure, I take bets — and there are some punters you want to be careful of because they make money. But I also bet myself. If you look at it analytically, you can make your pension."

Another bookmaker, Barry Dennis, scoffed at the suggestion that the small clientele could hardly make it worthwhile. "It's not more money per race here than I do at Royal Ascot," he said. "I can take

£5,000 on races quite regularly because people come here to bet. There are no lookers, no posers and no fancy types. It's good, proper business and that suits me down to the ground."

Even among owners, those wearing knee-length overcoats — much less the obligatory trilobites of the Turf — were in the minority. It was clear all-weather racing had spawned an environment in which the new breed of owner could feel comfortable. Gone are the days when racehorses went hand in hand with dripping

wealth. Syndicates have mushroomed into a significant entity, and many among them prefer Lingfield in winter to tweed-clad afternoons at Cheltenham.

Such a concept grates heavily with longer established patrons who believe artificial surfaces are the bane of the sport. Increasingly, however, racing's funds are generated at Britain's three all-weather venues. The contests have attracted many more runners than has been evident during jump racing's winter of discontent.

We are talking big money. According to David Hood, of the bookmaking giant, William Hill, turnover of £100 million was lost through last year's festive freeze — in which no horse racing of any description was staged for a week.

It is fair to say that all-weather racing has succeeded beyond the expectations of those who instituted it. The Jockey Club, which completed

the project against a tide of criticism, has validated a side of the sport it would once have preferred to keep under wraps.

The British Horseracing Board has inherited a veritable cash register. As it labours to please a fragmented industry, some among its board could learn much from the primitive message inherent in all-weather racing. It is that punters do not need to see grassy tracks to indulge in their daily ritual. To a growing number, the Elysian Fields are not even green.

BHB stages extra meetings to help make up shortfall

By OUR RACING STAFF

THE British Horseracing Board (BHB) has sanctioned an additional seven National Hunt meetings to make up for the shortfall caused by the freezing weather. A total of 49 fixtures has been lost and the BHB has secured additional Levy Board funding for the replacement meetings and enhanced prize-money for key events.

The new fixtures — four in the North and three in the Midlands — will be staged between January 14 and 28, the first of them at Leicester. And with the freeze forecast to continue into next week, more extra meetings could be arranged.

The BHB racing director, Paul Greeves, said: "Last season we had a dreadful time from Boxing Day to new year and this time the cold weather seems to be biting even longer and harder. We are putting on these fixtures as soon as we can, with the all-weather racing making things going in the meantime."

The first batch of replacement fixtures has been awarded to the tracks hardest hit by the cold weather. Warwick will race the most, with a new race created for leading two-mile hurdlers to be staged on January 11 and, on the same card, a £5,000 increase in the value of the Tote National Handicap Chase to £20,000.

The replacement meetings are: Leicester (January 14), Carlisle (January 20), Market Rasen (Jan 23), Uttoxeter (Jan 24), Ayr (Jan 27), Warwick (Jan 29).

Today is the sixth in a row without racing on turf. The all-weather card at Southwell has saved a blank day after the abandonment of Sedgefield, Towcester and Lingfield.

There are all-weather meetings at both Lingfield and Wolverhampton tomorrow.

INSPECTIONS

TOMORROW'S MEETINGS
LINGFIELD, all-weather
WOLVERHAMPTON, all-weather
SOUTHWELL, all-weather
FOLESTONE, all-weather known

have a chance. There is frost in the ground and a covering of snow to keep it there.

The situation at Warwick was little better. The racecourse manager, Lisa Rose, said yesterday: "There is still nearly an inch of snow on the track and no sign of it improving."

Prospects are already poor for next Wednesday's scheduled meeting at Kelso.

The clerk of the course, Johnnie Fenwick-Clelland, reported: "There are five inches of snow on the track. According to the forecast there is no sign of an improvement in conditions until Sunday at least."

Tomorrow's scheduled meeting at Naas is subject to an inspection today.

Domino Flyer to reward Swinbank

By RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT

NEVER mind the quality — which is close to non-existent — just measure the quantity of runners at Southwell this afternoon on a card that should carry a punters' health warning. After a winter of small National Hunt fields, 74 horses line up for six races which include a claimer, a seller, a maiden handicap and an amateur riders' race. With the form far from reliable in such low-grade contests, upsets seem certain and backers will need to tread warily.

However, one runner that should be a decent price does catch the eye. Ann Swinbank had been enjoying a cracking season with her horses over the jumps before the freeze and *Domino Flyer* holds

solid claims in the Lincolnshire Amateurs Handicap (3.0).

The four-year-old has run well three times in big fields at this track inside the last two months, including when he won over course and distance in November and he could offer some value. *Cats Bontom* won a slowly run race a week ago, his first victory for 2½ years, and looks worth opposing, as does *Twin Creeks*, whose two recent wins came over a shorter trip at Lingfield. *Kingship Boy*, from the in-form *Mick Ryan* yard, may be a bigger danger.

Pat Haslam had winners on Wednesday and yesterday and *Stoutrouge* has sound claims in the Nottinghamshire

Handicap (2.30) after showing up well over behind *Aripi* over course and distance last time.

When *Reg Hollinshead* books *Willie Ryan* to ride, the move often pays dividends and *Chadleigh Laze* has a winning chance in the Leicestershire Claiming Stakes (1.0), while *Patina* looks well weighted for her handicap debut in the Rutland Handicap (3.30).

Lingfield Park has changed the starting times at tomorrow's meeting, which means that Channel 4 viewers will be able to see five races. The first contest on a six-race card has been switched from 12.30pm to 1.15pm, with remaining events to be run at half-hour intervals.

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FA Cup weekend is threatened by Arctic weather

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

FOOTBALL clubs are working overtime in an effort to prevent this weekend's FA Cup third round from becoming severely disrupted by the big freeze. Spades and shovels, tarpaulin covers, thermal blankets and hot air bubbles are being used to clear and protect pitches as the sub-zero temperatures persist. Only clubs with undersoil heating have been able to give their ties the go-ahead with any degree of certainty.

Birmingham City and Crystal Palace, the Nationwide League first division clubs, have been particularly badly affected. Birmingham play Stevenage Borough, the Vauxhall Conference champions, at St Andrew's but are no more than "hopeful" of staging the game.

They have lost their last two home fixtures — against Tranmere Rovers and Manchester City — to the weather and are already counting the cost, estimated at £150,000. Even the hiring of a thermal blanket from a firm in Scotland and at £10,000 a match, has failed to safeguard the ground. An inspection is planned for tomorrow.

We want a perfect pitch to play on," David Sullivan, Birmingham's joint owner, said yesterday. "We don't want to give Stevenage any possible advantage by staging the

game on a sub-standard surface."

The tie was originally due to have been played at Stevenage but was switched on police advice. The non-league club had arranged for the players to take time off to travel to St Andrew's on Monday, to look around the stadium and train on the pitch, but the plan was shelved. Stevenage have also offered to pay half the cost of the blanket.

Palace's problems appear worse. Since the completion of the vast Holmesdale Stand, and when Arctic conditions prevail, Selhurst Park has become a virtual no-go area. Frost had penetrated deep into the pitch yesterday, with their game against Leeds United already looking a non-starter. An inspection was due at 11am today.

Palace's last two home games, against Stoke City and Reading, have been postponed. Wimbledon, who share the ground, also had to call off their FA Carling Premiership fixture against West Ham United on Boxing Day.

If the Leeds tie goes a similar way, Palace's losses over the three fixtures could amount to £250,000. Though a large slice of it has been banked, through pre-match ticket sales, the club still anticipates a cash flow shortfall of £100,000.

Arsenal, in line with many Premiership clubs, have undersoil heating — a network of water pipes run off a gas boiler. They have not lost a game because of a frozen pitch since it was installed in 1985 and their game against Sunderland is certain to go ahead.

Such systems cost upwards of £250,000, with maintenance expenses of about £20,000 a year, and are prohibitive to most clubs outside the Premiership. Even undersoil heating, though, can malfunction in a Siberian environment.

Steve Braddock, the Arsenal groundsman, said: "The heating dries the surface, which is held together by moisture, and when the air temperature is so cold, any irrigation can form ice on the leaf of the grass. It is towards the end of a season that this can cause problems."

The Welsh Rugby Union ran up a gas bill of £3,000 on Wednesday, trying to thaw the pitch for Emerging Wales' game against the United States at the National Stadium in Cardiff. However, the undersoil system proved unsuccessful, for the first time in nine years, and the tour match was called off.

Several of this weekend's fixtures have also been lost, including Bedford v Blackheath and Coventry v Rugby, while the horse racing programme has again been badly affected.

The turf meetings at Lingfield Park, Sedgefield and Worcester today have gone but the all-weather card at Southwell survives.

As legend has it, Hoad's baby daughter had her hair

cut while sitting in the Cup.

cut while sitting in the Cup.

Legend has it, too, that the same infant christened the world's most revered trophy as only babies can. Much of the detail, perhaps fortuitously, has faded amid the mists of time.

"There was a tremendous amount of trust in the city, a great comradeship," Richard Owen, the Portsmouth club

historian, said. "No one was sure which part of Pompey was going to be blitzed next, no one was sure where the Cup would be completely safe, so it was passed on from one person to another, from one place to the next."

It started off, according to

old records, at Fratton Park,

and was later transferred to the National Provin-

cial

Bank in Commercial Road. Tim, who wore his famous lucky spots at Wembley, also had a turn in possession. One night, as the German planes unleashed their fearsome loads, he sat

underneath the stairs of his house, the Cup jammed protectively between his legs.

When Bert Barlow, scorer

of one of Portsmouth's goals

in the day he mislaid the Cup. "I'd gone to a dance for the troops at the guildhall in Southampton and took it along to show all the lads," Barlow said. "I wasn't used to drinking whisky and I'd had a fair bit before I decided to go. That's when things started going wrong."

I had a little Morris 8 at

the time and one of the

springs broke. Then when I got home, I couldn't remember where I'd put the Cup. I didn't know where it was. I had a clue. When I got up in the morning, I had a look in the car again. It wasn't there. I really thought I'd lost it. Then I found it in the back of a cupboard in the kitchen. I'd no idea how it got there but I was mighty relieved."

Barlow vowed to err no

more. "It was the last time I drank whisky," he said. "I've never touched it since this day. And I gave the Cup back pretty quickly, too."

FA Cup history is rich in

fact and fiction, folklore and

fantasy: from the days of

Wanderers, the first winners

in 1872, to those of

Manchester United, the victors

last season. Every year, every round, creates new characters and distorts dis-

tant memories.

The people of Portsmouth,

tomorrow, should perhaps

dwell a while on the day they

won the Cup. How they kept

it out of harm's way; of the

roles of Tim, Barlow and

baby Hoad; and of the initial

hurt, yet subsequent joy, of

Larry Adamson, aged 13.

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England's fall from graciousness can be traced back to Faisalabad

Poor sportsmen afflicted by siege mentality

Simon Barnes complains that losing is bad enough without sulking about it

In the old days, an England cricket team went abroad with three aims in mind: (1) to win a lot of cricket matches, (2) to act the missionary for England and for the game and (3) to see the world and have a damned good time.

Things have changed. True, a modern England cricket team still aims to win cricket matches. But all notions of missionising have vanished, partly under the stresses of constant failure to fulfil aim one, and the very idea of having a good time is frowned upon. Try flying a *Tiger Moth* and see where that gets you.

On the tour of Zimbabwe, the England cricketers have failed to win any match worth winning and they have lost too many in utterly humiliating circumstances. But that is not the worst of it. They have also managed to get themselves roundly hated in a country that is remarkably mild-tempered and unchippy by Test match standards.

If you can't win you can at least behave graciously; after all, you tend to cut a slightly more grown-up figure if you do so. Very few people are impressed by the sulks.

England have made an utter hash of the role of missionary in one of the few cricket countries where such a notion is still vaguely relevant. The England cricketers are coming across as poor sportsmen and poorer sports. As for enjoying themselves well, perish the thought. The England cricket team have, I gather, been in a state of siege mentality from day one.

And that way lies disaster. A few weeks ago I watched a very small girl sitting by herself in an empty arena. Just sitting. She was Gina Cogean, the Romanian gymnast. She was enacting a standard piece of sports psychology: coming to terms with the place of competition. Learning it, making friends with it; making the place an ally.

This is a basic part of the business of being a professional athlete. But the England cricket team not only neglect it; they actively cultivate hostility. And it is utterly counter-productive. Q. E. D.

Zimbabwe is a wonderful place rich, beautiful, extraordinary. The cricket team have responded to its wonders by lurking about in the team room of whatever hotel they find themselves in and playing a word game called Balderdash. Yesterday, by way of adventure, they went out to play golf against each other. Some, Nick Knight; Jack

Russell, sit down in a padded, but most prefer the safety of the team hotel and the safety of each other's company. It is an approach that would turn Eden into a prison sentence.

What a splendid idea it was, then, to bring in Ian Botham as a motivator. He, more than any other cricketer, is responsible for the bunker-seeking, we-are-the-press mentality. These days, if you do not hate abroad and hate the press you are not fitting in, that most terrible of touring crimes.

Such an approach might be justified if it brought results, since that is the first aim of a touring party, but it does not. It has the reverse effect. And the worse the results get, the more a touring party becomes

sure England cricket was not so much embarrassed by the

Shakoor Rana incident as shattered — and totally bewildered. They could not understand the condemnation that fell upon them from all sides. English cricket was caught between two attitudes: ancient imperial arrogance, and modern, boot-faced professionalism.

What do they know of cricket who only cricket know? England lost the plot. They forgot the point of touring, the point of cricket, the point of sport. They lost matches, they lost friends.

And, hurt and bewildered as never before, the England cricket authorities paid each member of the side a £1,000 "hardship bonus". This was nothing less than an up-you gesture at Shakoor Rana, Pakistan and the world. Thus xenophobia was institutionalised.

Every tour since that moment in Faisalabad in December 1987 has been characterised by sulking resentment of the country, the team has visited and the opponents who represent it. Compare, and contrast with Mark Taylor, the captain of Australia, who toured Pakistan with a wild determination to charm to enjoy the country, its people and its cricket. Australia won both friends and cricket.

England cricket needs to take lessons in worldliness, in *savoir faire*, in simple good sense and in gentleness in challenging circumstances. I suggest England cricket tries to learn it from the Australians. They will soon have the opportunity to do so at close quarters.

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Botham: Mr Motivator

Australia summons for Stuart

AUSTRALIA, with a number of fast bowlers *hors de combat*, have called up Anthony Stuart, of New South Wales, for Sunday's one-day international in Brisbane against West Indies.

Stuart, who topped the domestic bowling averages last season with 25 wickets at 13.40 apiece, replaces Paul Reiffel who pulled a hamstring during Wednesday's defeat by Pakistan in the World Series game in Sydney. Reiffel joins Craig McDermott, Damien Fleming and Jason Gillespie on the list of those unavailable.

Curtly Ambrose, who took nine wickets in West Indies' six-wicket win over Australia in the third Test last week, has hamstring trouble and could miss today's game against Pakistan, for whom Waqar Younis is doubtful with a sore shoulder.

West Indies also have concerns over Shivaraj Chanderpaul, their most consistent batsman. The Guyanese left-hander had a wisdom tooth removed three days ago and is still unable to take solid food. "He is still very weak after two days in bed," Courtney Walsh, the captain, said.

□ Australian Cricket Board officials are investigating claims that several Pakistani players, who claim they were victims of racism, were verbally abused by the crowd during the match in Sydney.

Police arrested eight spectators for entering the playing area including one man who slid stomach-down into the stumps, and removed 86 spectators for unruly behaviour. Another six were arrested on charges including offensive behaviour, assaulting police and resisting arrest.

Kirsten century rubs salt into India's self-inflicted wounds

Test average into the forties. However, the purest bating of the day came from Cullinan, who plays the occasional stroke given only to the most highly gifted.

Any consolation India were able to take from the first hour would have come from the fact that they were not batting. Because of the catches that went down, Srinath and Prasad had nothing to show for 14 excellent overs, bowled at no great pace but to a good, full length.

The ball was usually doing a bit, mostly of the pitch, and a nice fresh breeze made it a lovely morning for bowling. With the gates closed, the ground was as full and the large pavilion as relatively empty as for the Test match against England a year ago, which meant an attendance of approximately 15,000.

Despite his four slips and a gully, Srinath's first six overs cost a mere two runs. As frustration overcame him later in the day, he bowled shorter and less threateningly.

Kirsten is too dogged, too experienced a player to look such a gift-horse in the mouth. He can be as aggressive in Test cricket as he is in the one-day game. Which England left-hander shall I liken him to? Perhaps Hugh Morris, of Glamorgan, is as good a comparison as any — a batsman whose fighting qualities could well have served England admirably had he been given more of a chance.

This was Kirsten's fourth Test hundred and took his



Gatting and Shakoor Rana eyeball to eyeball in an infamous confrontation

ENGLAND'S OVERSEAS TEST MATCH RESULTS											
Season		Opponents		Result		Tests		W		L	
1977-78	1986-87 series	Pakistan		D		5	1	1	1	3	2
1977-78		New Zealand		W		5	4	1	0	0	1
1978-79		Australia		W		5	4	1	0	0	1
1979-80		Australia		W		5	4	1	0	0	1
1980-81		India		W		5	4	1	0	0	1
1981-82		India		W		5	4	1	0	0	1
1981-82		South Africa		W		5	4	1	0	0	1
1982-83		Australia		W		5	4	1	0	0	1
1983-84		South Africa		W		5	4	1	0	0	1
1983-84		Pakistan		W		5	4	1	0	0	1
1984-85		India		W		5	4	1	0	0	1
1985-87		Australia		W		5	4	1	0	0	1
Total:	Matches					50	43	13	12	8	18
	Series					14	5	7	21	2	3

Compiled by Bill Frindall

though it was with a bouncer that he had Bachar caught at the wicket down the leg side, hooking.

The tallest and most pyramidal of an unusually tall Indian side — half a dozen of them are six footers — is Srinath's junior partner, Prasad, and it was off him that Kirsten was dropped before he had scored and again when he was seven. Azharuddin put him down to a low and two-handed chance at second slip off the eighth ball of the match.

The second opportunity fell to Kumble, in the gully, a chance that he might reasonably have expected to take 14 times out of 15.

One has always associated India's faster bowlers, and Pakistan's too, for that matter, with the northern frontiers of the sub-continent, but the four in this touring party all come from Bangalore, far to the south.

The third of them yesterday was Ganesh, playing in his first Test, and they are all graduates of the Pace Academy.

SCOREBOARD

SOUTH AFRICA: First Innings

A.C. Hudson c Monga b Prasad ...	16
G. Kirsten run out ...	103
A.M. Bachar c Monga b Srinath ...	25
D.J. Cullinan c Monga b Prasad ...	71
D. G. Gough c Prasad b Srinath ...	25
B.M. Botham not out ...	13
Extras (b 6, nb 5) ...	11
Total (4 wktS) ...	290
To bat: S.M. Pollock, J.D. Richardson, L. Klaasen, A.A. Donald and P.R. Adams.	
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-37, 2-68, 3-203, 4-251.	
BOWLING: Srinath 25-6-70-1; Prasad 20-1-74-2; Ganesh 13-4-54-0; Kumble 10-2-51-2; Gough 10-2-51-2; S.C. Ganguly 4-0-14-0; Azharuddin 1-0-1-0; V.V.S. Laxman, A. Kumble, J. Srinath, B.K.V. Prasad, D. Ganesh.	
Umpires: D. Hay (Aus) and R. Koerten (SA). Match referee: B. Jamison (Aus).	

my in Madras, which, at the behest of the Indian Cricket Board, is presided over by Dennis Lillee, the great Australian. Unlike their mentor, they are not likely to frighten the best players out, but they should be good enough on their day to improve India's dismal record away from home.

By mid-afternoon, however, they were looking a considerable total in the face. It will be as well to wait for South Africa to bowl before saying it is a pitch on which everyone should get runs. It has a certain spring to it and South Africa are not in the habit of spending long days in the field.

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Houghton's plan knocks out Atherton

FROM SIMON WILDE IN HARARE

IT IS hardly an original tactic but the rewards are too great for any opponents to ignore: undermine Michael Atherton and you undermine England.

The difference in the past six weeks has been that Zimbabwe have succeeded to an extent matched by few teams. A total of 178 runs in 12 visits to the crease, including 54 in four Test innings, tells its own story.

It is one of the worst patches of his career — not helped, admittedly, by a recurrence of his back problem in the tour's early days — and has undoubtedly played its part in England's failure to dominate opponents who have delighted at any opportunity to deny them the right to feel superior over Test cricket's newest recruit.

"So let us look at some numbers. In the ten years preceding Shakoor Rana, England won five series abroad, including two in Australia. They drew two, lost seven. In the decade since Shakoor Rana, they have won abroad just once, in New Zealand. They drew another New Zealand series, a one-match series in Australia, and the current series in Zimbabwe. The other eight series have all been lost."

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Shakoor Rana incident as shattered — and totally bewildered. They could not understand the condemnation that fell upon them from all sides. English cricket was caught between two attitudes: ancient imperial arrogance, and modern, boot-faced professionalism.

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David Powell on how the Spaniard put the brakes on a glorious career

Indurain's winning cycle draws to a halt

Within a month of Carl Lewis doing the same, Miguel Indurain, fellow Atlanta Olympic champion and competitor of rare distinction, announced his retirement from sport's big stage yesterday. Even as he spoke, though, Indurain left cycling wondering whether he has been premature in making his decision to ride into the sunset.

Indurain, the only man to win the Tour de France in five successive years, disclosed in Pamplona, his home town in Spain, that never again would he be seen competing in professional cycling. If widely predicted, the sense of loss was immediate nevertheless,

CAREER

Born: July 16 1964 in Vitoria, Navarre, Spain. Height: 1.85m. Weight: 80kg. Turned professional: 1984. Team: Reynolds (1984-89), Banesto (1989-96). Major victories: Olympic gold medal, Olympic games (Atlanta); 1992 World time-trial championship (Columbia); 1992 Spanish championship; 1990 San Sebastian Challenge; 1990 Tour de France (1991-92); Individual time-trial stages; Tour of Italy; 1992 and 1993 (four stages); Paris-Nice; 1989 and 1990; Critérium du Dauphiné; 1993 and 1994; 1992 and 1993; 1994; 1995; 1996; International; 1989; Tour of Catalonia; 1988, 1991 and 1992; Tour of Asturias; 1996; Bicicleta Vasca; 1996; Tour of the European Community; 1991; Vuelta a Andalucía; 1992; Tour of Navarra; 1992; Vuelta a Asturias; 1992; Vuelta a Galicia; 1992; Vuelta a Cantabria; 1992; Vuelta a Madrid; 1992; Vuelta a Andalucía; 1993.

made worse for Indurain's refusal to concede that a record-breaking sixth Tour win might have been beyond him.

"The decision has been tremendously difficult for me because physically, I am in good shape and I think I might still be fit enough to win the much-desired sixth Tour," Indurain said. He shares with Jacques Anquetil, Eddy Merckx and Bernard Hinault a record five Tour wins, though none of the other three achieved theirs in as many years.

Indurain, 32, and arguably the fittest man the world has known, failed to win a sixth consecutive Tour last year



Indurain displays the grit and determination that brought him five successive Tour de France victories

he concentrated on the Tour to the exclusion of most other challenges. Claude Jacquet, a senior official of the International Cycling Union, the sports world governing body, opined yesterday that Indurain could not be compared to Merckx.

"I cannot place him on the same level as his fellow five-time winner, Merckx, as Eddy wanted to win every race in the season whereas Miguel only wanted the Tour de France," Jacquet said.

Doctors were fascinated by Indurain's extraordinary lungs; he had a resting heart rate of 28 beats per minute, a lung capacity of eight litres and a heart capable of pumping 50 litres of blood per minute for hours on end.

Only occasionally would a sportsman rival Indurain for popularity in Spain. Martín Fiz was one such competitor when he won the marathon at the 1995 world championships. Close friends, Fiz and Indurain had a common doc-

tor and physiologist in Sabino Padilla and the runner confessed to having been influenced by the cyclist. "His calmness, the way he always sticks to his own rhythm and never panics if someone breaks away, just like by little reeling them in," Fiz said of Indurain's qualities.

Calculations relating to Indurain's income vary. One source said he earned £1.5 million a year, another that his failure to find a team willing to pay him £5 million

for the 1997 season sealed his fate.

Indurain has probably pumped more in, though, than he has taken out. Jean-Marie Léblanc, director of the Tour de France, said that Indurain was not just a great rider. "He was a perfect gentleman," Léblanc said yesterday. "Always approachable, always willing to sign autographs. He was a great ambassador for the sport."

Popular hero, page 15

ICE SKATING

Olympian can climb higher

By JOHN HENNESSY

ANY conversation about British hopes for medals at the next Olympics would be certain to range far and wide. Yet, it is likely that such a conversation would ignore one of the best prospects this country possesses. His name is Nicky Gooch, who is not an athlete, oarsman or swimmer, but a winter competitor on ice.

Gooch, from Barnes, does not live in the glamorous world of triple axels, split twist lifts or the choctaws and mohawks of the ice dancers.

He is a short-track skater, a discipline in which speed, guts and stamina are paramount, where elegance of costume or performance count for nothing. He promises to be the main attraction at the Tessa

best event is the 1500. The fourth race, over 300 metres, is also absent from the Olympic programme.

Yet talented as Gooch is, he is unlikely to have it all his own way in tomorrow's final. Matt Jasper, of Nottingham, also 23, deprived Gooch of two of his British records, over 500 and 1000, last year, though Gooch later re-established himself over the longer distance.

In the women's event Debbie Palmer, like Gooch a Guildford-based skater, will be looking for her seventh successive title, her confidence boosted by encouraging performances last year — third in the European championships and eighth in the world.

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As coach and chief executive of Sheffield Eagles for 12 years, Hetherington proved himself an impressively versatile operator.

His latest appointment will not affect the day-to-day coaching duties of Dean Bell.

SKIING

Wiberg holds upper hand in title race

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

PERNILLA WIBERG will have an advantage over Kaja Seizinger, her rival, when the pair resume their struggle for the women's overall Alpine skiing World Cup title in Maribor, Slovenia, today. Wiberg, of Sweden, boosted her confidence last weekend by clinching her second victory of the season in a slalom in Semmering, to take the overall lead from Seizinger, the absent title-holder.

Wiberg, who has 612 points to the German's 494, likes the technical events and will be more comfortable in the giant slalom today and the slalom tomorrow, than Seizinger, a speed specialist, who opted to miss the back-to-back slaloms at Semmering to train in her favourite speed disciplines.

Seizinger, the 1993 super

giant slalom world and 1994 Olympic downhill champion, was also weakened by a bout of influenza last month which forced her to pull out of a slalom in Crans Montana, Switzerland.

Although Wiberg is a 1991 and 1992 Olympic giant slalom champion, she has had only one World Cup victory in this discipline, six years ago. Seizinger, who has celebrated the majority of her wins in downhill and super giant slalom, has four World Cup giant slalom victories to her credit.

This winter, Seizinger has made the rostrum at both giant slalom races so far, with a victory in Sölden and a third place behind Sabina Panzani, of Italy, and the Austrian, Anita Wachter, in Park City, Utah.

SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm)	Conditions	Runs to off/p resort	Weather (pm) °C	Last snow
ANDORRA Sölden	30 155	good powder	good	snow (Excellent slush with light powder on firm base)	1 2/1
AUSTRIA Obergrü	40 140	good varied	fair	cloud	5 26/12
	20 65	fair	varied	icy	2 24/12
	45 180	good	varied	icy	4 23/12
St Anton				(Plenty of good pasty slush; gusty winds)	
FRANCE Alpe d'Huez	95 250	good powder	good	snow	2 2/1
	25 225	good	varied	(Excellent slush with powder snow everywhere)	2 2/1
	60 140	good	varied	slush	4 2/1
	100 190	good	varied	good	1 2/1
La Plagne				(Snow in generally excellent shape; more snow forecast)	
	70 200	good	good	good	3 2/1
S Chevalier				(Excellent snow conditions on all pistes)	
	60 180	good	varied	good	2 2/1
Val d'Isère				(Fresh powder on and off piste; poor visibility)	
	60 200	good	varied	fair	6 2/1
Val Thorens				(Excellent snow; poor visibility)	
	160 240	good	varied	good	2 2/1
	240 360	good	varied	good	2 2/1
ITALY Cervinia				(Very windy at altitude; snow generally very good)	
	180 360	good	good	snow	8 2/1
SWITZERLAND Mürren	60 180	good	varied	icy	-1 30/12
	50 190	good	varied	fair	2 21
Verbier				(Tricky conditions with flat light snow; good though)	
	40 100	good	varied	fair	1 30/12
Wengen				(Good powder slush in all areas; some hard patches)	
	40 100	good	varied	icy	-1 30/12

Source: Ski Club of Great Britain. L - lower slopes; U - upper; art - artificial

One-colour journalism

Paper Talk, Radio 5 Live, 10.05pm

Here is further proof that Radio 5 Live can effortlessly hit its twin targets, news and sport, with one arrow. The charge it brings against the British press is that not one mainstream broadsheet paper has a black or Asian journalist working full-time on its sports desk. There must be some truth in the allegation, otherwise why should the Commission for Racial Equality have launched its campaign to encourage editors to employ more black journalists? Press-watchers and working journalists get the chance to confirm or deny the existence of a colour bar. The *Observer* sports editor is one who insists that "quality and resources" are the only criteria that influence job decisions.

Composer of the Week, Radio 3, noon and midnight

There are, as usual, two composers of the week. The midnight composer tonight is last week's midday choice, repeated. The noon composer today is Leonard Bernstein whose Broadway musicals have provided Humphrey Burton with an embarrassment of riches. His series ends today with *West Side Story*. The impact this musical made at its premiere in 1957 was phenomenal; rarely has a musical score so dynamically motivated stage action. Midnight brings the conclusion of a fascinating episodic series about the life of letters which, for 16 years, flowed between Tchaikovsky and his wealthy patroness, Nadezhda von Meck.

Peter Davison

RADIO 1

7.00am Mark Radcliffe, Includes News, weather and travel update 9.00 Kevin Goring, Includes the news du Jour and the Weather, 10.00 Radio 1 News, 11.00 Triple J, 12.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 1.00 Radio 1 News, 2.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 3.00 Radio 1 News, 4.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 5.00 Radio 1 News, 6.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 7.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 8.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 9.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 10.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 11.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 12.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 1.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 2.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 3.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 4.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 5.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 6.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 7.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 8.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 9.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 10.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 11.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 12.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 1.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 2.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 3.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 4.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 5.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 6.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 7.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 8.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 9.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 10.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 11.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 12.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 1.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 2.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 3.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 4.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 5.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 6.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 7.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 8.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 9.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 10.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 11.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 12.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 1.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 2.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 3.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 4.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 5.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 6.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 7.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 8.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 9.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 10.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 11.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 12.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 1.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 2.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 3.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 4.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 5.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 6.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 7.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 8.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 9.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 10.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 11.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 12.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 1.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 2.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 3.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 4.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 5.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 6.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 7.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 8.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 9.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 10.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 11.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 12.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 1.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 2.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 3.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 4.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 5.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 6.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 7.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 8.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 9.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 10.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 11.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 12.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 1.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 2.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 3.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 4.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 5.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 6.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 7.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 8.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 9.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 10.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 11.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 12.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 1.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 2.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 3.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 4.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 5.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 6.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 7.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 8.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 9.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 10.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 11.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 12.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 1.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 2.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 3.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 4.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 5.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 6.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 7.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 8.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 9.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 10.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 11.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 12.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 1.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 2.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 3.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 4.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 5.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 6.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 7.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 8.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 9.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 10.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 11.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 12.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 1.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 2.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 3.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 4.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 5.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 6.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 7.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 8.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 9.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 10.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 11.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 12.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 1.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 2.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 3.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 4.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 5.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 6.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 7.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 8.00 Radio 1 News Extra, 9.00 Radio 1 News Extra

Situation only distantly related to comedy

The ghastly starting point for *Nest of Kite* (BBC1) is an ancient history, the car crash that robbed Georgia, Philip and Jake of their parents, fled away in the great sitcom archive under D for death. So, with the series inexplicably back for a third outing, the big question remains: why isn't it funny?

Last night's opening episode gave us the chance to test a new theory. With Maggie (Jacqueline Keegan) in bed with him and several dreams of being relieved of her unwanted grandchildren, the focus switched to Andrew (William Gaunt). Could it all be his fault? Not directly, of course. Gaunt is a lovely actor and no doubt a lovely man. But is his amiable Andrew what's needed here?

I am beginning to think not. First, it's hard to believe that he could ever have married the awful Maggie and, secondly, in the event of him doing so and then

having to adopt his own grandchildren, I think he should cope rather well. It's written all over him – he's a coping mechanism. But here is where the theory breaks down. An 18-year-old girl, who has just been dumped by her boyfriend, is coping by having sex with her dad. Yet

she's not the only one.

At the start of the series, they

by growing. Normally, sitcom children remain a foot shorter than their parents until they are well into their thirties (look at Michael J. Fox). But here Philip (Matthew Clarke) has shot upwards and upwards and been rewarded with his first girlfriend. Meanwhile, his aggressively vegetarian sister Georgia (Ann Gossling) looks set to be transformed into a swan. Her reward was more jokes about tofu and a polite request to borrow a hairdryer. That didn't seem quite fair.

Dath and transformations also had a part to play in *The Nanny* (Sky One), yet another imported American sitcom. Maxwell Sheffield (played by the English Charles Shaughnessy) is a wealthy Broadway producer and a widower with three children with whom he does not enjoy the best of relationships. They don't even get invited to his

showbiz parties – or they didn't

until he employed a new nanny who quickly knocked her young charges into shape. Beginning to sound familiar? If I haven't seen *Climb Every Mountain* yet, meant Nanny Fine, played by Fran Drescher.

Not heard of Fran Drescher? No, neither had I. But whenever she is, she has an ego that makes Jimmy Nail look like a shrinking

Giordano violet. Not only does she star in it, but she takes a producer's credit, together with separate "created by" and "developed by" acknowledgements. She also, we were told, wrote the story but, not, curiously, the screenplay. Ah, American reticence – don't you

love it?

At this point it would be fashionable to say *The Nanny* is far superior to *Nest of Kite*. But for all that it's tempting, it wouldn't be quite fair. *The Nanny* is unashamed star-vehicle fantasy, the story of how a sweet sixteen girl from Queens – all high heels and fake tan – makes it in Manhattan high society, while *Nest of Kite* is still aspiring to live in the real world.

The Nanny is also very American – some of the jokes I couldn't spell let alone laugh at. But one or two hit the spot, which, together with the fact that *The Sound of Music* is

one of my favourite films, means I may give it another chance.

Earlier, the producer of *Incredible Journeys* (BBC1) appeared to have missed a seasonal trick by calling his first film *A Caribou's Trek* rather than anything to do with reindeer. But on second thoughts, Nigel Marven was right – by the eighth day of Christmas we'd had a gulf of reindeer, the North American alternative would do very well.

By the eighth day of Christmas we also seem to have had a gulf-full of natural history programming. *Incredible Journeys* was going to have to be quite something to restore my flagging appetite for matters biological. Thankfully, it was, charting the caribou's 6,000-mile round trip up and down the coast of Labrador.

True, there was rather too much do-eyed chat about "our little calf" for my liking, a fact which conveniently meant that it was always

somebody else's little calf carried away by golden eagles, drowned in rivers or eaten by wolves. But the photography – barring a rather shaky simulation of the flight of the warble fly – was wonderfully ingenious and precise.

The same cannot be said, however, of the plot of last night's *The X Files* (BBC1). When Agent Scully starts talking hair colourant, you know you're on dodgy ground. We were. A man called Pusher had a brain tumour that endowed him with the sort of psychic abilities that made persuading people to kill themselves as easy as Mulder knowing that *no nin* was the Japanese for a samurai without a master.

"Are we talking kung fu movies here?" asked Scully, brightly. No, we're talking *X Files*, which meant the whole improbable thing was wrapped up in 45 minutes and Mulder and Scully held hands – twice. Progress of sorts, then.

REVIEW



Matthew Bond

BBC1

BBC2

The Gold Plane

BB2, 8.10pm

In April 1944 a British transport aircraft bound for Algeria crashed into the sea off the north Cornish coast, killing the Canadian crew and all 22 passengers. The cause of the tragedy was never explained, fueling suspicions of a cover-up and rumors of sabotage. Locals were convinced that a plane carrying a cargo of gold, though a search of the sea revealed nothing. For the last 16 years Derek Rowles, a former police superintendent, has been trying to unravel the mystery. The film is an account of his detective work, which has involved exhuming the pilot's body and travelling as far as Canada to talk to witnesses. At the end of it he comes up with a theory about the crash, which is as ingenious, as, at this distance, it is unprovable, and will delight believers in conspiracy theories.

The Ruth Rendell Mysteries: The Double

ITV, 9.00pm

Ruth Rendell fans should be warned that this is neither an Inspector Wexford whodunit, nor one of her excursions into the darker side of the human psyche. Adapted like the other dramas in this series, from a Rendell short story, it takes its cue from the Victorian superstition that if you to meet your doppelganger you will die. Camilla Power, so good in *The Treasure Seekers* on Christmas Day, has the double role. Approximating to virgin and whore, they are two young women whose resemblance to each other is not only disconcerting to them but to the bumptious Nick Leeson-type banker Jason Flemyng who sleeps with one while enraged to the other. Adapted by Piers Haggard and directed by Mary McMurray, both reliable names, it is a slightish tale, padded out with psycho-babble, though not without its scary moments.

Captain Butler

Channel 4, 10.35pm

Time was when sitcoms had to have a plot. Often these were contrived and unbelievable, but they did at least give the jokes a framework. But gradually the idea has fallen into disrepute and with *Captain Butler* it seems to have been abandoned completely. The show is set on board a pirate ship, with Craig Charles as the weak-kneed captain of an incompetent crew comprising an elderly bosun, a former African slave, an Asian cook and a sassy young aristocrat. Nobody could say that this opening episode lacks incident. There are encounters with Blackbeard, Lord Nelson and an albatross. But the script, by John Smith and Rob Srokling, offers a collection of sketches rather than a coherent narrative. Some of the material is genuinely funny, but not when it falls back on jokes about genitals and bodily functions.

Dani Dares

Channel 4, 12.10am

The premise of Dani Behr's series is that being a television presenter is nothing like as dangerous and challenging as some of the jobs women do. Just how dangerous and challenging Beirr discovers at first hand, as she launches herself into such activities as fire-fighter, bounty hunter and stand-up comic. In the first programme she joins nine other women on a bodyguarding course in Scotland and in case you are wondering why the series should be set in such a lousy hole, the answer may lie in Neil G. Breen. He is the insufferable, baldly South African user of euphemisms, and the word in particular, puts even Graham Taylor in the shade. You feel the women deserve to pass their rigorous exam just for suffering De Beirr's abuse, though he would say it is part of the toughening process. Peter Waymark

John Morris in Sydney (7.20pm)

John Morris from *Liberty* (7.30pm)

The Gold Plane (7.30pm)

